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**4TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP
ON THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

**BRAZZAVILLE, REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
FRIDAY, 21 MARCH 2014**

CONCLUSIONS

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1. The International Contact Group on the Central African Republic (ICG-CAR) held its fourth meeting in Brazzaville, on Friday, 21 March 2014, under the co-chairmanship of Mr. Basile Ikouebe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of the Congo, and Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union (AU). The list of countries and organizations that took part in the meeting is indicated below¹.

2. The opening ceremony was graced by the presence of H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, who delivered the opening speech of the meeting. His speech was preceded by statements made by the Prime Minister of the CAR transitional Government, André Nzapayeke; the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui; the ECCAS Secretary-General, Ambassador Amad Allam-Mi; the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad, Madam Kassiré Isabelle Housnan; as well as by the message of the UN Secretary-General read out by his Special Representative in the CAR, General Babacar Gaye.

3. Participants reviewed the evolution of the situation in the CAR since the 3rd meeting of the ICG-CAR held in Bangui, on 8 November 2013, on the basis of the briefing provided by the CAR Prime Minister, as well as interventions by the international actors involved in the management of the situation in that country and the ensuing exchanges of views.

On the evolution of the situation in the CAR

4. Participants, having noted the obstacles that have severely hampered the conduct of the transition towards the end of 2013, welcomed the election of Mrs. Catherine Samba-Panza as Head of State and the appointment of Mr. André Nzapayeke as Prime Minister, as well as the subsequent formation of a new Government, in line with the conclusions of the ECCAS 6th Extraordinary Summit held in N'Djamena on 9 and 10 January 2014. They noted that the changes at the top of the executive of the transition create an environment conducive to more sustained and coherent national efforts for an early way out of the crisis, as well as to a greater mobilization of the international community in favor of the CAR.

5. Recalling the serious incidents that took place in Bangui in early December 2013, with the attack launched by the anti-Balaka group, the subsequent abuses and sectarian tensions, Participants acknowledged that the security situation has significantly improved thanks to the action of the African-led International Support Mission in the CAR (MISCA) and Operation Sangaris. They noted, in this regard, the continued reduction of the level of violence, the gradual return to normal life in Bangui and elsewhere in the country and the beginning of the return of displaced populations. Participants stressed the need for continued efforts to strengthen the trend towards an improved security situation and the extension of State authority throughout the national territory. They strongly condemned the armed groups and elements that continue to perpetrate criminal acts and attempt to undermine the efforts of the transitional authorities.

6. Participants noted that, in spite of the improvement of the security environment, the humanitarian situation remains a source of concern. In this regard, they noted the massive displacement of civilian populations both within the CAR and towards the neighboring countries, and stressed the urgency of greater international mobilization to meet the needs of the affected populations.

¹ Algeria, Angola, AU, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, CAR, Chad, China, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, France, Gabon, India, Japan, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom and United States, African Development Bank (AfDB), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), European Union (EU), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), International Organization of *la Francophonie* (OIF), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), United Nations (UN) and World Bank

7. Participants welcomed the appointment of the seven members of the National Elections Authority (NEA). They noted that the NEA members, with the support of the UN, the EU, France and MISCA, had already made several visits to the countryside, and that they had developed a timetable for the electoral process spread over 12 months. At the same time, they recognized the daunting challenges that lie ahead for the proper and timely conduct of the electoral process.

On the implementation of the Roadmap for the Transition

8. Participants took note of the update provided by the CAR Prime Minister on the implementation status of the Roadmap for the Transition. They noted the announcement made by the Prime Minister on the presentation of an implementation plan of the revised transitional Roadmap to the National Transitional Council (NTC), in early April 2014.

9. Participants stressed the need for greater political commitment on the part of the CAR stakeholders to help consolidate the security gains recorded thanks to the action of MISCA, with the support of the Sangaris operation. They recalled the primary responsibility of the CAR stakeholders in resolving the serious crisis facing their country, stressing that the role of the international community is to support national efforts and not replace them. In this context, Participants urged the CAR authorities to strengthen the measures aimed at isolating and applying sanctions against spoilers, especially the anti-Balaka elements, and promoting national reconciliation; in this respect, they encouraged countries that have undergone similar processes to share their experiences with the CAR. They strongly recommended to the CAR Government to initiate an inclusive dialogue among the various political and social stakeholders in the CAR. They urged the Government to keep the members of the ICG-CAR regularly informed of progress made in this regard, so as to facilitate the mobilization of international support.

10. Participants also stressed the necessity and urgency of more sustained efforts regarding the reform of the defense and security sector and the programme for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). In this context, they urged the Government to quickly implement, in accordance with the provisions of UN Security Council resolution 2134 (2014), the DDR strategy it has adopted, taking into account all armed groups. They stressed the importance of developing a national vision on the defense and security sector reform and DDR, which is in line with the current capabilities of the State and takes into account the urgency of stabilizing the situation. Participants agreed that the Government would keep international partners regularly informed of measures taken in this regard.

11. Participants welcomed the apologies presented by the CAR Prime Minister, on behalf of the CAR nation, to the neighboring countries whose nationals were victims of atrocities and other violations of human rights on the CAR territory. The Prime Minister noted that, in spite of these abuses, the countries concerned have continued to fulfill their duty of offering hospitality to the CAR citizens.

On regional and international efforts

12. Participants welcomed the ongoing efforts of the ECCAS leaders and acknowledged the crucial role of the region in the resolution of the CAR crisis. They welcomed the decisions taken by the 6th ECCAS Extraordinary Summit and the financial assistance that the region extends to the CAR to enable it meet some of its most pressing needs. They renewed their confidence and gratitude to Presidents Denis Sassou Nguesso, Mediator of ECCAS, and Idriss Deby Itno, Chairman of ECCAS, urging them to pursue and intensify their action in support of peace, security and stability in the CAR. They urged the international community, including the UN Security Council, to effectively support the continued role of the region and to ensure that any international initiative on CAR further this objective.

13. Participants welcomed the transformation of MICOPAX into MISCA and the measures taken by the AU to enable the Mission to quickly reach its authorized strength of 6,000 uniformed personnel. They paid tribute to MICOPAX for the work it carried out in a challenging environment.

14. With reference to the donors' conference for MISCA organized by the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, on 1 February 2014, Participants expressed their gratitude to the AU Member States that have made pledges or are already extending support to MISCA (ECCAS Member States, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Namibia, Nigeria and South Africa). Similarly, they expressed deep appreciation to the international partners who provide financial, logistical and technical support for the deployment and operations of MISCA, including the U.S., the EU and its Member States (France, Luxembourg and United Kingdom), Canada, Japan and Norway. They thanked the UN and France for availing expertise to MISCA. They commended MISCA for its outstanding work on the ground, in coordination with Sangaris, whose strength was recently increased, noting that this work has significantly improved the security situation in the CAR. They paid tribute to the soldiers and police officers who fell in the line of duty and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

15. Participants welcomed the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) to authorize the deployment of additional police personnel and specialized capabilities to enhance the effectiveness of MISCA. In this context, they launched an urgent appeal to all international partners to provide increased support to MISCA, especially in terms of mobility, equipment and financial resources. They agreed that the AU would submit, within a week, an updated list of MISCA's needs to facilitate the rapid mobilization of the required resources. Similarly, they expressed the hope that, in order to ensure a smooth and efficient transition between MISCA and a UN operation, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report of 5 March 2014, the UN Security Council would authorize the establishment of a specific and appropriate support package. Participants welcomed the EU decision to launch operation "EUFOR RCA" to contribute to the consolidation of the gains recorded by MISCA with the support of the Sangaris operation. They welcomed the ongoing efforts to strengthen coordination between MISCA and the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA).

16. Having recalled that the objective of MISCA is to create, with the support of Sangaris, conditions for a more sustained and sustainable international engagement in the CAR and noted that MISCA plans to complete the initial stabilization phase of the situation in the next six to nine months, Participants welcomed the prospect of the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation. They stressed the need for the AU and the UN to spare no efforts in ensuring a successful transition, drawing lessons from previous experiences. In this regard, they noted the relevant provisions of the communiqué adopted by the AU PSC at its 422nd meeting held in Addis Ababa, on 7 March 2014, stressing that the success of MISCA is an essential condition for the success of the envisaged UN operation.

17. Participants welcomed the holding in Brussels, on 20 January 2014, of the International High-Level Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in the CAR. Reiterating their deep concern at the scale of the humanitarian crisis in the CAR and noting that only 21 percent of the required amount has been mobilized to date, they strongly urged all concerned donors to honor their commitments as soon as possible. They expressed gratitude to the countries of the region hosting CAR refugees. They commended MISCA for its support to humanitarian operations, including escort of convoys from the Cameroon border to Bangui, protection of IDP sites and of humanitarian actors.

18. Participants acknowledged the seriousness of the socio-economic problems faced by the CAR, stressing that the situation calls for urgent action by the international partners and for the adjustment of the procedures governing international assistance to fit the peculiar situation of the CAR. In this regard, they stressed the importance of the regular payment of salaries for civil servants and pensions of the retirees, as well as support for the reactivation of the state and administrative machinery. They welcomed the ECCAS decision to devote 50 out of the 100 million U.S. dollars pledged during the donors' conference held in Addis Ababa to economic and budgetary support to

the CAR. They welcomed the reactivation by the World Bank and the French Development Agency (AFD) of their offices in Bangui. They encouraged the international financial institutions, notably the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as the African Development Bank, to accelerate the resumption of their assistance to the CAR and to rapidly and effectively disburse the resources pledged.

19. As part of efforts to stabilize the situation in the CAR, Participants stressed the need for the imposition of sanctions against all CAR individuals and entities attempting to hinder the transition and the peace and reconciliation process. They urged the UN Security Council, in line with resolution 2127 (2013), to quickly designate individuals and entities to be sanctioned in order to send a clear message to the spoilers about its determination to hold them accountable for their actions. In the same spirit, Participants welcomed the commencement of the work of the International Commission of Inquiry on the situation of human rights in the CAR since 1 January 2013. They look forward to the review by the AU of its list of individuals under sanction for acts that undermine peace efforts in the CAR.

On the strengthening of the ICG-CAR and follow-up of its conclusions

20. Participants agreed on the need to strengthen the effectiveness of the ICG-CAR and its support to the transition. Against this background, they requested the co-Chairs of the ICG-CAR, namely the AU Commission and the Republic of the Congo, to establish, under their leadership, a small informal structure comprising ECCAS and key international partners, as well as the CAR, to ensure the follow-up of the conclusions of the regular meetings of the ICG-CAR, facilitate the involvement of specialized experts and foster the mobilization of additional resources. The *modus operandi* of this structure, which will meet at least one month before every regular session of the ICG-CAR, will be determined by the co-Chairs in consultation with the concerned partners.

21. Participants requested that the commitments made by the CAR Government and the members of the ICG-CAR, as well as the recommendations concerning them, be captured by the AU Commission in a matrix format and circulated to all the members of the Group. The latter will, in turn, inform the co-Chairs of the follow-up steps they have taken before every meeting of the Group. Participants welcomed the participation of the OIC for the first time, as a member of the ICG-CAR, in the meeting of the Group, and its desire to contribute to national reconciliation, humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as to the reconstruction of the CAR.

Next meeting of the ICG-CAR

22. Participants agreed that the next meeting of the ICG-CAR will be held in Addis Ababa, in June 2014, at a date to be determined through consultations.

Motion of thanks

23. Participants expressed their gratitude to the Congolese authorities for the generous hospitality extended to all the delegations that attended the meeting, and for the excellent arrangements made for the successful holding of the meeting.