

## **CEUMC Visit to EUMAM RCA**

### **Medal Presentation Ceremony**

**08 January 16**

*(Depending on the level of attendance,*

*Monsieur le Premier Ministre, Messieurs les Ministres, Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, other authorities)*

Men and Women of EUMAM RCA, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am proud to be among you today, and address you on behalf of the Chiefs of Defence of the 28 member-States and of the High Representative of the European Union.

My visit here serves one goal. That is, to demonstrate and to highlight the importance we, in the Military Committee place on your work here, and to portray the interest of the higher elements of the European Union instances in it.

You are here to serve a noble cause: to support the Central African authorities in preparing a reform of their security sector with respect to the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic (FACA). The desired end state is an Army better capable of managing itself in terms of accountability and governmental oversight, an Army well-prepared for the forthcoming Security Sector Reform (SSR) program. A reform that will strengthen the security sector and that will transform the CAR Armed Forces into a professional, democratically controlled and ethnically representative army. Additionally, you conducted temporary limited and targeted non-operational training of the FACA, in order to improve the conditions for implementing the upcoming reforms.

This is a very important task. It will help the Central Africa Republic turn the corner after the security crisis it has gone through. It will help bring enduring stability and security not just within the borders of this friendly nation, but also to the wider region. In this endeavour, your close cooperation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) is critical. It also demonstrates the potential that

lays in civilian and military working together, side by side, complementing each other's work and creating synergies. It is what we call in Europe, a Comprehensive Approach and you, here in Central African Republic, you put this Approach into practice.

In doing so, you also serve the European and your respective countries interests. Because, to establish a stable and secure European neighbourhood is in our best interests. Building state capacities to take care of their own is in our best interests. In this way, people will not be afraid. People will not have to become refugees to find shelter, security or freedom.

And you are the proof of a Europe that takes responsibility of its neighbourhood. Of a Europe that cares. Of a Europe that is willing and that capable to assist and share its best practises with those who seek assistance. Of a Europe that is looked up to, because of its values.

This should fill you with pride. You represent **that** Europe at your daily interactions. Each and every one of you here does not represent only themselves as individuals: at the same time you represent your Nation and the European Union.

Make no mistake: Although far away from home, the world watches you. The United Nations, Europe, Africa, they all watch you. Because Central African Republic is an important country. The multitude of foreign missions (International, Governmental, NGOs) is a concrete proof of that fact. Your very presence here is a concrete proof of that fact. The pure fact that even Pope Francis's paid a historical visit in CAR late November (29-30 November 2015) further underlines the sensitivity of high profile global figures to the conditions that prevail in this country.

Men and Women of EUMAM RCA,

You are the military element of the European Comprehensive Approach to address the crisis in the Sahel region. A Comprehensive Approach that has become the trademark of the European Union. You set the foundations of a secure environment, so that all the financial resources allocated to development projects in the region will have a lasting result.

You perform your duties in a professional and effective way, standing up to the highest expectations of your nation and of the European Union. For your hard work and your tireless efforts, I express to you my gratitude and that of the Chiefs of Defence of the 28 Member States, as well as of the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. This medal will remind you of your station here. Wear it with pride.

Thank you.