

Written submission

Peacebuilding Commission advice to the Security Council on the Central African Republic

Tuesday 1st November 2022, at conference room number 11, at 10:00 am

The Peacebuilding Commission has engaged through its Configuration with the Central African Republic (CAR) in conformity with UNSCR 2282 (2016) in reaffirmation of the Peacebuilding Commission's advisory role to the Security Council. This year the Commission has engaged with CAR on the rule of law, the fight against impunity, transitional justice efforts, including highlighting the need for greater support to the Special Criminal Court (SCC) and the Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TJRRC). The second Ambassadorial meeting on CAR this year discussed the postponed local elections intrinsically linked to the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (APPR); expansion of political space and inclusivity for meaningful participation and empowerment of woman and youth; decentralization at grassroots level to foster governance and development and national reconciliation and social cohesion. An expert level meeting informed the configuration on the implementation of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA).

The Commission appreciates the continued engagement, including sharing of experiences and lessons learnt from CAR's context with members of the Peacebuilding Commission and recognizes the efforts from the CAR authorities to advance the implementation of the APPR through the Joint Roadmap for Peace by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) adopted on 16 September 2021.

Based on its continuing engagement in peacebuilding in CAR, the Commission would like to share the following points:

1. The Commission is alarmed by the continuation of conflict and violence in the country, and its adverse repercussions on vulnerable groups, especially women and children. This security situation compounds the fragility, which is already precarious, especially in the socio-economic and development sphere. The Commission welcomes the Government's commitment to and progress in the process of integrating the joint Luanda roadmap and the APPR, and the progress made in the implementation of priority activities. The Commission highlights the continued need to foster dialogue, reconciliation and social cohesion, which are the cornerstones of peace, in addition to ensuring the effective provision of and access to basic social and economic services.
2. The Commission stresses the importance of holding local elections, scheduled for January 2023, as a major symbolic and institution building step, crucial to ensuring inclusivity, especially for the participation women and youth in the election and electoral process. The Commission emphasizes that required legislation for the local elections should be passed as soon as possible to enable voter registration and other critical processes to ensure the success of elections. The Commission notes with concern the significant shortfall in budgetary allocation of US\$14 million, which risks

undermining the preparations of local elections, and potentially, to long-term stability and peace in the country.

3. The Commission recognizes the continued importance of the rule of law and transitional justice to building sustainable peace in CAR and supporting the peace process. In this regard, the Commission welcomes progress in the operationalization and functioning of transitional justice in the judicial sector, and welcomes the operationalization of transitional justice mechanisms, especially the Special Criminal Court (SCC), and underlines their crucial roles in the fight against impunity, the extension of state authority, and accountability, justice, and national reconciliation. In this context, the Commission welcomes the completion of the first trial by the SCC on 31 October, the recommencement of criminal sessions at the Courts of Appeal of Bangui and Bouar, and progress with the training and deployment of internal security forces and the new national prison service. The Commission underlines the crucial need for adequate, predictable and sustainable financing, as well as technical and logistical support for the SCC and TJRRC to perform their mandated tasks and recalls its efforts to utilize its platform as a pledging forum to address the budgetary constraints of these mechanisms. The Commission also stresses the need to continue the necessary and multi-faceted support to the Central African justice system within the framework of National Justice Sector Reform Policy, which aims to strengthen and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the sector.
4. The Commission underscores the RCPCA as a critical aspect to inclusively foster socio-economic recovery and development, which underpins the implementation of the APPR, and the consolidation of peacebuilding dividends that are intrinsically linked to sustainable peace. Noting the negative impacts of the COVID19 and the ongoing global energy and food crisis, on the implementation of the RCPCA, the Commission highlights the importance of providing the necessary support to CAR authorities, so as not to compromise the recovery efforts made which could increase the vulnerability of the Central African population. The Commission encourages the Government of the Central African Republic and its partners to ensure alignment with RCPCA and APPR, and notes the critical support provided by MINUSCA to the implementation of the RCPCA through the Civil Affairs component.
5. The Commission recognizes the significant contribution young people can make in peacebuilding and calls for more efforts by the Government of the Central African Republic to ensure the effective inclusion and participation of youth in the election and electoral process in CAR. In this respect, the Commission recognizes the role of MINUSCA in supporting local community prevention and response networks.
6. The Commission emphasizes the importance of including women in the peacebuilding process in CAR which currently remains limited and calls on further efforts to address root causes of conflict and violence in communities, including gender-based inequality and discrimination. The Commission also emphasizes the importance of efforts to

- address the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in a gender-responsive manner in collaboration with women's civil society organizations.
7. The Commission underlines the importance of enhanced cooperation and coordination between the UN, regional and sub-regional organisations such as the African Union (AU), Economic Commission of the Central African State (ECCAS), and International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) in assisting the country with its peacebuilding processes, in accordance with its identified priorities and in full respect of the principle of national ownership.
 8. The Commission welcomes the invaluable support provided by the Peacebuilding Fund to CAR. With over \$115,933,004 approved for projects in CAR since 2008, the Fund supports cross-cutting projects related to durable solutions, transhumance, national dialogue, youth inclusion and mental health within the greater framework of the RCPCA and the APPR. The Commission also welcomes the annual Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, which supports national initiatives to enhance women and young people's participation in peacebuilding.

The Commission, while adhering to its mandate, will continue to support the Government of CAR in the implementation of the Joint Roadmap to foster sustainable peace and bring about improvements in livelihoods for the citizens of CAR.