



## Update on women, peace and security in the Central African Republic August 26<sup>th</sup> 2022

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The Informal Expert Group (IEG) of the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security discussed the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) in June 2016 ([S/2016/672](#)), December 2016 ([S/2016/1105](#)), November 2017 ([S/2017/1041](#)), and October 2018 ([S/2018/1087](#)). This update summarizes relevant developments since the last meeting in October 2018.

### Developments in the Security Council

On 12 November 2021, the Security Council adopted **resolution 2605 (2021)**, extending the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) until 15 November 2022, with China and the Russian Federation abstaining. **The mandate includes extensive and detailed language on women, peace and security**, including in its priority tasks, with specific tasks for the mission to support women’s participation in all spheres of decision-making, and preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). **Previous mandate renewals adopted in 2020, 2019 and 2018 also had strong language on gender issues**. On 12 March 2021, the Council had adopted resolution 2566 (2021), which approved an increase of the ceiling for troop and police deployments to MINUSCA in light of the post-election violence. The resolution includes several references to women, peace and security, including requesting the Secretary-General to ensure that decisions regarding deployment of all personnel of MINUSCA adhere to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security. Relevant excerpts of both resolutions are included in the annex.

On 29 July 2022, the Council adopted **resolution 2648 (2022)**, extending the CAR sanctions regime until 31 July 2023, with China, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya and the Russian Federation abstaining. The resolution text itself did not include gender-related language, but the extension comprises the standalone designation criterion related to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The resolution also renewed the mandate of the CAR Panel of Experts until 31 August 2023, including the provisions requesting the Panel to include the necessary gender expertise and encouraging it to integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue across its investigations and reporting. The Panel consist of five experts, one of them covering humanitarian affairs but none specifically focusing on SGBV. The June 2022 report of the Panel of Experts includes a dedicated section on rape and sexual violence in which the Panel announced its intention to focus its investigations on SGBV with a view to proposing names to the sanctions list of individuals and entities. In 2020, the Sanctions Committee listed Martin Koumtamadj, President and commander-in-chief of the Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain (FDPC) and Bi Sidi Souleman, leader of Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation, the latter following a briefing of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict to the Sanctions Committee. The narrative summaries reference acts of SGBV, but they have not been designated under the standalone criterion related to SGBV. The SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict briefed the Committee again in July 2021.

The presidential statement made on 9 April 2019 establishing **benchmarks for suspending or progressively lifting the arms embargo measures** does not include a reference to women, peace and security. The progress report submitted to the Council on 14 June 2022 includes disaggregated data on disarmed and demobilized combatants and reintegration on ex-combatants and participation in community violence reduction programs.

In **press statements** issued in 2020, members of the Security Council underlined the importance that the implementation of the peace agreement is conducted with the participation of civil society organizations, including women and youth and urged the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in presidential, legislative and local elections in 2020 and 2021. They also demanded that armed groups cease violations involving SGBV and reiterated the imperative need to hold accountable perpetrators of SGBV in conflict.

Three Central African **women from the civil society briefed the Council in country-specific meetings** since the last meeting of the IEG in October 2018.

In June 2022, **Lina Ekomo**, President of the Network for Women's Leadership in CAR, denounced that most peace initiatives exclude civil society, including women and young people and noted that this is a handicap in moving towards peace. She reported that since the beginning of the peace initiative in CAR, civil society actors, particularly women have been consulted only for long-distance exchanges or by missions visiting the country. Ms Ekomo had previously called out the exclusion of women from the negotiations of the peace agreement and their limited participation in its implementation when she briefed the Security Council in its open debate on women, peace and security in October 2019. Lamenting the absence of a comprehensive and coherent support program for women's civil society organizations, she called for a more strategic approach towards cooperation with civil society and highlighted the importance of the establishment of the national chapter of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) as a coordination framework for Central African women leaders. In her briefing in October 2021, **Pamela Audrey Derom**, President of the National Council of Central African Youth, advocated for the inclusion of young people, urging to no longer consider them as beneficiaries but as partners in the implementation of development projects and programmes. She requested the Council to completely lift the arms embargo to shore up State authority. Similarly, in her briefing in February 2021, **Kessy Martine Ekomo-Soignet**, Director of a youth-led peacebuilding organization, emphasized that there will be no lasting peace without the effective participation of women and young people, who make up more than 75 per cent of the population. Urging that their contribution should not be limited to ad hoc consultations but should follow a participatory, inclusive and active approach at all levels of decision-making, she called for technical and financial support for women peacemakers and young people. Ms. Ekomo-Soignet also drew attention to the increase in SGBV and called for justice for women and girls who have been raped and physically abused.

**Nadia Carine Therese Fornel-Poutou**, Executive President of the *Association des femmes Juristes*, briefed at the open debate on CRSV in July 2020. She reported on horrific cases of sexual violence with survivors of all ages, including children younger than 10 years of age. Lamenting that protection services have been either dysfunctional or absent since the beginning of the crisis, she called on the Council to support local civil society organizations assisting survivors of SGBV and to consult them in a meaningful way. Ms Fornel-Poutou also demanded to strengthen holistic care for survivors, including sexual and reproductive health services and access to justice. Emphasizing that survivors of CRSV need a functioning, effective and gender-sensitive justice system, she called for support to the Mixed Unit for Rapid Intervention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (UMIRR) and asked Council members to advocate for CRSV to be given special attention by the Special Criminal Court, the ordinary national courts, as well as by all transitional justice mechanisms.

### **Women's participation in the peace process and in politics**

**Women were largely excluded from the peace process** that led to the signing of the Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation (APPR) signed in Bangui on 6 February 2019 following the peace talks with the 14 armed groups held in Khartoum from 24 January to 5 February 2019. Only 8 women were among the 78 delegations members and there was only one woman signatory from the armed groups. Moreover, only 78 women were among the 450 participants (17 per cent) at the **republican dialogue** in March 2022

and only two of the ten members of the presidium were women. However, women were either President or Vice-President of the dialogue's six thematic commissions. As a positive development, five out of the 11 members of the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation sworn in on 2 July 2021 are women and a woman was elected as the Commission's president.

**Women's participation is higher on the community level.** Women represent 34 per cent of the members of the Local Peace and Reconciliation Committees. Furthermore, women made up more than half of participants in MINUSCA-facilitated community dialogue sessions on the return of internally displaced people (IDPs), transhumance, and peaceful cohabitation organized between October 2021 and February 2022, and more than a quarter of community alert network members trained by MINUSCA in the same period.

**Women's representation in politics is slowly increasing** but is still far below the 35 per cent quota enshrined in the Parity Law. The **government** established on 23 June 2021 includes seven women among its 37 ministers, representing 21.8 per cent which is above the 14.7 per cent in the previous government. Only two of the 16 candidates in the presidential elections in December 2020 were women. Out of the 16 prefectures in the country, only three are led by women. Following the **elections** held in March and May 2021, women's representation in the **National Assembly** has increased from 8 per cent to 12 per cent. The 14-member bureau of the National Assembly elected on 7 March 2022 only includes three women. Out of the 1504 validated candidates only 234 were women, representing 15.59 per cent which constitutes a five per cent increase compared to 2015. The Constitutional Court had allowed 27 political parties to submit candidates for the legislative elections despite failing to meet the 35 per cent quota for female candidates. Under the current legal situation, parties can provide a simple explanation to the Court as to why they have not met the quota and still get validated. The establishment of a **National Parity Observatory** to monitor implementation of the Parity Law, which would help addressing this gap, is still pending. Nevertheless, an evaluation of MINUSCA's support to the electoral process by the Office of Internal Oversight Services showed that the mission's activities to engage women in the election had a positive effect on women's candidacy rate. In contrast to the low number of women candidates, almost 47 per cent of registered voters were women. However, overall, the electoral process showed that women's political participation continues to be impeded by barriers, including gender bias, a lack of political will and the deteriorating security situation.

MINUSCA reported several instances in which **armed groups threatened women** with the sole aim of dissuading them from participating in the electoral process and elections, knowing about their important and active role in peace and reconciliation. Furthermore, in Ouaka prefecture, women were not allowed to register on the electoral list because they lacked birth certificates, whereas MINUSCA did not receive similar complaints concerning men. In a UN Women study published in January 2022, 3.5 per cent of surveyed women indicated having been victims of violence during enrolment, and 14 per cent said that they were victims of violence during electoral campaigns and voting. This included refusal to enter voting centers, kidnapping of female candidates to demobilize their supporters, and prohibition from participation in counting of votes. A quarter of the surveyed women responded that the reduction in the number of women who run for political positions is the first consequence of electoral violence against women. UN Women, UNDP, and MINUSCA had established a hotline and a situation room dedicated to protecting women candidates and voters from electoral violence.

**Local elections** are scheduled to take place in CAR in January 2023. It will be the first local election held in 34 years and represents a critical opportunity to strengthen women's participation in politics. As per the electoral code, parties are to present a candidate list with at least 35 per cent women. Support is ongoing by the UN to women's voter registration, and through political leadership projects to potential women candidates.

**The Constitutional Court has reached gender parity** with 4 women among its 8 members. Women make up around 25 per cent of police officers and but only around 16 per cent of gendarmes. Only 219 women were among the 3826 total beneficiaries in the national DDR programme since its inception in 2018, but women are nearly half of the beneficiaries of community violence reduction activities.

CAR is currently implementing its second **National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP)** (2019-2022). The 2021-2022 Annual Report of the NAP implementation, produced by UN Women, shows that progress remains slow in all four pillars (Prevention, Participation, Protection and Recovery). Cross-cutting challenges include lack of gender-sensitive budgeting and dedicated budgets for gender except for two ministries, a lack of dissemination of the NAP and reporting mechanisms by actors engaged on the WPS agenda, low coordination capacity from the Ministry of Gender, and lack of strong political will to mainstream gender in strategic areas such as defense and security. The vibrance of civil society organizations is increasingly visible, but capacity and coordination issues affect the impact of their engagements.

### **Human rights issues, including conflict-related sexual violence and gender-based violence**

**Gender-based violence (GBV), including CRSV, has sharply increased in CAR** and sexual violence is now seen as the main security risk for Central African women and girls. Reasons for the surge include the intensified conflict before and after the elections, increased militarization, and the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons.

In 2021, MINUSCA verified **CRSV cases** affecting 379 women and 327 girls, which is **double the number of reported cases** in 2020. This is still likely to be an undercount as the fear of reprisals, stigmatization, the lack of services, and widespread impunity prevent survivors from reporting these crimes. The cases recorded in 2021 included 555 rapes or attempted rapes, 17 forced marriages or attempted forced marriages and 17 cases of sexual slavery. Most cases lack a proper integrated response and follow-up.

Although the APPR calls for the cessation of all forms of SGBV, **signatories continue to target civilians with sexual violence**. CRSV cases verified by MINUSCA in 2021 have been attributed to Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC), Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation, Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique, Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC), anti-balaka elements, ex-Séléka, Fulani armed elements, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), as well as the national armed forces and internal security forces and other security personnel. In a statement<sup>1</sup> issued on 27 October 2021, several UN experts warned that they received reports of officers of the Wagner Group committing rape and sexual violence against women, men, and young girls in many parts of the country. Moreover, in the 2021 annual report of the Secretary-General on CRSV, the CAR national armed forces were listed for the first time as credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence.

Two reports published by MINUSCA and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on 25 July 2022 describe disturbing violations in CAR, which can be **qualified as war crimes and crimes against humanity involving CRSV**. The first report features a brutal and organized attack on the village of Boyo in the Ouaka prefecture between 6 and 13 December 2021 by a pro-government militia resulting in the death of at least 20 people, including a 12-year-old girl, and CRSV against at least 5 women. The second report describes how specific armed groups have perpetrated recurring acts of sexual violence in a systematic and widespread manner in the Mbomou and Haute-Kotto prefectures during the occupation by the CPC and the FPRC from December 2020 to April 2021. In total, the report documented 226 cases

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/11/car-russian-wagner-group-harassing-and-intimidating-civilians-un-experts>

of CRSV affecting 245 women and girls. Most of the victims, aged between eight and 55, were gang raped. In 2022, in response to the latter report, the national judicial authorities requested the opening of the judicial investigations through the UMIRR and other units. The authorities also declared to have initiated a judicial investigation into the facts presented in the other report documenting the attack on Boyo.

The Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) recorded a **26 per cent increase of reported GBV cases in 2021 compared to 2020** with women and girls making up 95 per cent of survivors of recorded GBV cases. The upward trend continues: **The number of cases of GBV reported in the first half of 2022 (11,732 cases) has already surpassed the total cases reported in 2021** (11,592 cases). Sexual violence cases represent 37 per cent of the reported cases and 51 per cent of the overall cases have been presumably perpetrated by intimate partners. The GBVIMS data does not capture the full spectrum of the GBV situation, as many women and girls are not accessing services due to unavailability and insufficient GBV intervention in many locations, insecurity, fear of retaliation and stigma. The GBVIMS also identified worrying trends of victims of sexual violence becoming younger and younger and an increase of acts allegedly committed by weapons bearers. Lack of economic opportunities in many affected communities continue to expose many women and girls to various forms of GBV including sexual violence, survival sex, intimate partner violence, and forced marriages. According to the January-June 2022 protection monitoring report, gender-based violence incidents represent 37 per cent of all protection incidents in CAR.

Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to SGBV during the **transhumance period**. They have been attacked with extreme brutality in isolated areas while carrying out livelihood activities or traveling to the fields and school. Furthermore, **mining sites** are flashpoints for sexual violence in Ouham-Pendé, in which members of Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation and ex-Séléka elements gradually expanded their areas of control, making part of the region inaccessible to humanitarian organizations. In her briefing to the Security Council in 2020, Ms Nadia Carine Therese Fornel-Poutou explained that armed groups target people with sexual violence based on their ethnic or religious background, or because they reside in an area that is supposedly populated by rival militias. Due to stigma, survivors of SGBV are often afraid or ashamed to return to work or resume other activities to support them and their families, which pushes them into poverty.

**Internally displaced women and girls** are at a particular risk of sexual violence and have been attacked by armed group fighters in and around their bases and checkpoints. During the first half of 2022, the GBVIMS data indicates that 17 per cent of the survivors of reported GBV cases are IDPs and 2 per cent of GBV cases were perpetrated at the IDP sites. IDPs were particularly vulnerable to sexual violence as they sought food or returned home to situations of insecurity exacerbated by the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons. The lack of civil documentation contributes to their risk of being subjected to GBV. In refugee and internal displacement camps armed elements posed threats to civilians, such as in Batangafo, where families expressed the fear of being pressured to marry women and girls to armed elements.

The Panel of Experts monitoring UN sanctions reported that more than **100 children were abducted** in 2021 and the majority of them were girls, most of them abducted with the purpose of being sexually abused or to be recruited. FPRC, as part of the CPC, and the LRA were identified as the main perpetrators. The SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict reported in 2020 that Fulani girls are being **forcibly married** to members of armed groups with whom Fulani elements are aligned.

In its 2021 report, the Panel of Experts documented instances of **FACA members engaging in sexual relations with women in the local communities** in areas where they were deployed and noted that violence linked to this is not limited to acts perpetrated directly by FACA elements but has also resulted in acts of retaliatory violence by local armed groups angered by such relationships. The Panel of Experts also reported that in March 2021 FACA soldiers and Russian instructors looted humanitarian organizations and **stole kits for victims of sexual violence** worth around 1 million CFA (\$1,850).

Some **measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 had an adverse impact on women's security**. In May 2020, the Ministry of Justice released 676 prisoners, including 59 reported perpetrators of rape, from detention centers, in order to minimize virus transmission. In Ouham-Pendé, when a reintegration project was suspended because of the pandemic, ex-combatants returned to their activities within armed groups, resulting in increased reports of sexual violence in the area.

By contrast, when the Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation, Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain, and anti-balaka elements **joined the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program** in July 2019, this contributed to a **decrease in CRSV** in the west of the country, where these groups had largely been operational.

On 31 May 2019, the UN and the CAR government signed a **new Joint Communiqué** to strengthen protection, service delivery and accountability for CRSV. As part of the implementation of the agreement, in September 2021, the President nominated a Minister Counsellor to serve as **Special Adviser to the President on CRSV**. The government also created a **strategic committee** for coordination and advocacy, and discussions for funding are underway.

In 2021, the **UMIRR**, whose deputy director is a woman, submitted 372 judicial records (*procès-verbaux*) of cases of violence against women, girls and children to the judicial authorities in charge of prosecutions at the High Courts of Bangui and Bimbo. The **Bangui Court of Appeal handed down three convictions for CRSV** in 2020, following the provision of technical and financial support to the national judiciary by the UN Team of Experts on Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. The Team also helped building case-tracking capacity in the high courts of Bangui and Bimbo in order to strengthen coordination between national investigative units and relevant jurisdictions. While ordinary criminal court sessions had halted partially owing to the pandemic, which had stalled pending sexual violence cases, the Bangui Court of Appeals held its first criminal session of 2022 between 19 April and 21 June. 20 cases were heard by the Court during this session, including 7 cases of sexual violence. The Court of Appeals of Bouar also held its first criminal session from 20 June to 15 July 2022 and tried 22 cases, including seven of sexual violence. The **Special Criminal Court** opened one investigation into SGBV in 2021. The **Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission** is yet to be fully operational. Many survivors of CRSV do not seek justice because of fear of stigmatization by the community, lack of trust in the judiciary system, or its weak presence, especially in the interior of the country.

In its diagnostic report on the judicial response to CRSV by the national authorities, the UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict highlighted **significant progress in the fight against impunity in recent years** thanks to the creation of UMIRR and the establishment of the Special Criminal Court. However, the report also outlines the **persistent challenges of the judicial response**, in particular due to the technical gaps of the judicial actors working in the field of CRSV, the lack of means to carry out their work, an environment or a legal framework that is not conducive to adequate investigation and prosecution and the influence of harmful cultural norms in the judicial environment.

More than 21 per cent of Central African women and girls have undergone **female genital mutilation (FGM)**. Women and girls in rural areas are twice as likely to be subjected to FGM than women and girls living in urban areas (28 and 12 per cent respectively).

Several women imprisoned in Bimbo prison have been charged with **charlatanism and witchcraft** even though neither the country's legislators nor its case law defined these offences. Women with disabilities over 60 years old are at a specific risk of being accused of witchcraft.

## Humanitarian issues and women's socio-economic situation

The humanitarian situation in CAR has worsened. 3.1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance (63 per cent of the population) and more than half of them are women. Women also constitute more than half of the population that will be affected by **acute food insecurity** in 2022 (51 per cent of 2.4 million people). The number of pregnant and breastfeeding women and children in **need of emergency nutritional therapy** has increased by 31 per cent in 2021. CAR has the **highest maternal mortality rate in the world**: 890 Central African women die due to pregnancy related complications for every 100,000 live births, compared to an average of 439 deaths in Africa. The **illiteracy rate** for women is at 75 per cent, compared to 53 per cent for men.

Inadequacy of local development initiatives, reduction of humanitarian aid, low income coupled with poor living conditions have contributed to further increasing the **vulnerability of women and girls to GBV**. While in 2022 1.2 million people will need GBV assistance in CAR, the **availability of quality GBV services is still insufficient in most of the prefectures**. During the first semester of 2022, the GBVIMS reported that only an average of 43 per cent of GBV survivors have accessed multisectoral services covering a maximum of 2 services among psychosocial support, health services, legal assistance, safe shelter, economic empowerment/livelihood support, security/police. Approximately 30 per cent of rape survivors could access clinical management of rape services within 72 hours. Health services for sexual violence cases remain a challenge in many locations where health services are poorly equipped with supplies of post rape kits or qualified personnel. The majority of GBV partners work mainly on first aid, psychosocial support and GBV prevention. Significant gaps remain in the area of economic empowerment for vulnerable women, security services, safe shelter as well as legal and medical assistance. There is a need for safe spaces for women and girls to enhance participation in community activities, access to information, and empowerment. Furthermore, the GBV response programme does not yet integrate cash. For instance, from January to June 2022, only 3 per cent of GBV survivors received cash assistance from UNHCR and its partners. Survival sex has been identified as a recurrent negative coping mechanism for women and girls who cannot work, and targeted cash assistance could provide a temporary safety net, thus reducing the risk factor.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a widening of the **poverty gap between men and women**. Women and girls constitute the majority of the workforce in the informal sector which was particularly affected by lockdown measures. More women than men work in precarious jobs and 70 per cent of women-headed households now earn less than CFA 30,000 per month, compared to 60 per cent of male-headed households. According to OCHA, 86 per cent of women-headed households reported discrimination against women over 60 years of age in accessing markets. Women constitute the majority of the agricultural workforce but because of lack of modern tools and limited access to credit, agricultural yields are low. **Women's access to land is limited** mainly due to discriminatory customary practices. Cases of sexual violence against women and girls when accessing fields limit women's productive capacity.

## MINUSCA and sexual exploitation and abuse

The share of women in the military component of MINUSCA rose from 3 per cent in October 2018 to 7 per cent in June 2022 and in the police component the number increased from 8 per cent to 13 per cent in the same period.

Between 1 June 2021 and 30 April 2022, MINUSCA recorded 33 allegations of **sexual exploitation and abuse** (SEA). The mission referred at least 146 victims, including 39 children to humanitarian partners and local institutions for medical, psychological and protection assistance. On 14 September 2021, the UN decided to repatriate the Gabonese military contingent of 410 troops from MINUSCA over serious allegations of SEA, which reportedly occurred in Alindao in 2020 and 2021, as well as a lack of action by

the troop-contributing country with respect to current and past allegations. In response to continuing cases of SEA, MINUSCA is maintaining community-based complaint networks and decentralized SEA prevention networks to its field offices, in coordination with locally deployed United Nations country team members. The Mission is implementing preventive measures, including closer oversight of single nationality contingents deployed to remote locations. In October 2021, MINUSCA, jointly with concerned stakeholders, undertook a strategic review with a view to shifting its SEA risk management to a more integrated, proactive and decentralized approach.

### **Recommendations**

In the upcoming negotiations on the Central African Republic in the Security Council, the Security Council should retain the references to women, peace and security in resolution 2605 (2021), and consider the following language in operational paragraphs:

*Urges the CAR authorities to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, throughout the implementation of the recommendations of the republican dialogue, the ongoing strategic review processes of the peace process, and at all levels of the transitional justice process, including in the work of the Special Criminal Court and the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission.*

*Urges the CAR authorities to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation in the local elections, as well as create a safe environment for women's participation, and requests MINUSCA to provide support.*

*Urges CAR authorities to create a safe and enabling environment fostering women's rights and participation, and requests MINUSCA to assist, including by monitoring and reporting on threats and violence against women leaders, peacebuilders and human right defenders engaged in the political process.*

*Welcomes the appointment by the President of a Special Adviser on conflict-related sexual violence to advance the implementation of the joint communiqué and urges the CAR authorities to integrate efforts to address conflict-related sexual violence into the implementation of the joint road map for peace and transitional justice institutions.*

*Requests MINUSCA to continue engaging and consulting regularly and meaningfully with women's civil society.*

*Requests MINUSCA to ensure its efforts to address the proliferation of small arms and light weapons are undertaken in a gender-responsive manner in collaboration with women's civil society.*

*Requests MINUSCA to strengthen its engagement with the conflict parties, especially armed groups, on international humanitarian law and women's protection against gender-based violence.*

*Requests concerned United Nations entities involved in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual and gender-based violence prevention, mitigation and response to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms, including data collection, reporting and quality and timely response to identified cases.*

In the CAR Sanctions Committee, Council members should consider the listing of individuals under the standalone designation criterion related to sexual and gender-based violence.

In addition, the IEG co-chairs and other Council members should:

- Advocate with CAR authorities for the operationalization of the National Parity Observatory and for putting in place gender-responsive legal frameworks, such as a decree on the implementation of the parity law and a revision of the law on political parties and the electoral code.
- Increase funding for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, socio-economic reintegration of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and their access to justice.
- Provide flexible funding to women's rights organizations and local women's peacebuilding initiatives.
- Provide sustainable support to the Mixed Unit for Rapid Intervention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (UMIRR).

## ANNEX

### Relevant language in resolution 2605 (2021) extending the mandate of MINUSCA

*Emphasizing* that any sustainable solution to the crisis in the CAR should be CAR-owned, including the political process, and should prioritise reconciliation of the Central African people, through an inclusive process that involves men and women (...)

*Condemning* in the strongest terms violations of the APPR and violence perpetrated by all parties to the conflict throughout the country, including (...) those involving conflict-related sexual violence,

*Taking note* of the upcoming local elections in 2022 (...), *stressing* that only inclusive, free and fair elections (...) can bring lasting stability to the CAR, including through the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women (...),

*Recalling* its resolutions on (...) Women, Peace and Security, (...) *calling upon* all the parties in the CAR to engage with the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and *welcoming* the decision by the CAR government to name a Special Adviser on Sexual Violence in Conflict,

2. *Urges* all parties to the conflict in the CAR to respect the ceasefire, and *calls on* the CAR authorities and the signatory armed groups to fully implement the APPR in good faith (...) including through the follow-up and dispute resolution mechanisms of the APPR, and ensure full, equal and meaningful participation of women in such mechanisms and in the mechanisms established by the APPR to support and monitor its implementation;

4. *Strongly condemns* all violations of international humanitarian law committed in the CAR, including (...) gender-based violence (...),

7. *Encourages* the CAR authorities to cement and broaden national awareness and ownership of the APPR (...) and *further encourages* the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and youth in this process;

9. *Urges* the CAR authorities and all national stakeholders to ensure the preparation of inclusive, free and fair local elections in 2022 (...), with the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women as voters and candidates, including by meeting the quota of at least 35 percent of women as required by the law of the CAR (...),

11. *Urges* the CAR authorities to address the presence and activity of armed groups in the CAR by implementing a comprehensive strategy that prioritises dialogue (...) and the urgent implementation of an inclusive, gender-sensitive and effective DDR process (...),

12. *Calls on* the CAR authorities to implement the National Security Policy, the National Strategy on SSR and the National Defence Plan (...), taking into account the recruitment of women (...),

26. *Urges* all parties to armed conflict in the CAR to end all violations and abuses committed against children, including those involving (...) rape and sexual violence (...),

27. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict in the CAR, including armed groups, to end sexual and gender-based violence, *further calls upon* the CAR authorities to swiftly investigate alleged abuses and prosecute alleged perpetrators in order to fight against impunity of those responsible for such acts, and to take concrete, specific and time-bound steps towards implementing the UN and government of CAR joint

communiqué to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict and to ensure that those responsible for such crimes are excluded from the security sector and prosecuted, and to facilitate immediate access for all survivors of sexual violence to available services, including mental health and psychosocial services, *calls on* the CAR authorities and international partners to sustain adequate support to the Mixed Unit for Rapid Intervention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (UMIRR);

34. *Decides* that the mandate of MINUSCA shall include the following priority tasks:

-To provide specific protection and assistance for women and children affected by armed conflict, including through the deployment of (...) women protection advisers and civilian and uniformed gender advisers and focal points, as well as consultations with women's organizations, and by adopting a gender-sensitive, survivor-centred approach in this regard, especially to provide the best assistance to survivors of sexual violence, and to support women's participation in early warning mechanisms;

-To support the implementation of the UN and Government of CAR joint communiqué to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict and to take into account these specific concerns throughout activities of all Mission components, in line with the UN Field Missions policy on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, and to ensure, in cooperation with the SRSG for Sexual Violence in Conflict, that risks of sexual violence in conflict are included in the Mission's data collection, threat analysis and early warning system;

-To ensure that the Mission's political and security strategies promote a coherent peace process, particularly in support of the APPR, that connects local and national peace efforts with the ongoing efforts to (...) promote the participation of women and gender equality;

-To assist the CAR authorities' efforts, at national and local levels, to increase participation of political parties, civil society, women, survivors of sexual violence, youth, faith-based organisations, and where and when possible, IDPs and refugees to the peace process, including the APPR;

-To provide good offices and technical expertise in support of efforts to address the root causes of conflict (...), while ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, including survivors of sexual violence, in line with the CAR national action plan on Women, Peace and Security, including through the support to local dialogue and community engagement;

-To support efforts of the CAR authorities to address transitional justice as part of the peace and reconciliation process, and marginalisation and local grievances, including through dialogue with the armed groups, civil society leaders including women and youth representatives, including survivors of sexual violence (...),

35. *Further authorises* MINUSCA to pursue the following tasks of its mandate, working in close coordination with the United Nations Country Team (...):

-To monitor, help investigate and ensure reporting on violations and abuses committed against children and women, including rape and other forms of sexual violence in armed conflict, in connection with the UMIRR;

-To continue to support the CAR authorities in the training of police and gendarmerie and in the selection, recruitment, and vetting of police and gendarmerie elements (...), taking into account the need to recruit women at all levels (...),

-To support the CAR authorities in implementing an inclusive, gender-sensitive and progressive programme for the DDR (...) while paying specific attention to the needs of children associated with

armed forces and groups and women combatants (...), and the need to prevent re-recruitment, and including gender-sensitive programmes;

-To support the CAR authorities and relevant civil society organisations in developing and implementing CVR programmes, including gender-sensitive programmes (...),

-Without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the CAR authorities, to support the restoration and maintenance of public safety and the rule of law, including through apprehending and handing over to the CAR authorities, consistent with international law, those in the country responsible for crimes involving serious human rights violations and abuses and serious violations of international humanitarian law, including sexual violence in conflict, so that they can be brought to justice (...);

42. *Requests* the Secretary-General fully implement the following capacities and existing obligations in the planning and conduct of MINUSCA's operations:

– strengthening the implementation of a mission-wide early warning and response strategy (...) and ensure gender-sensitive conflict analysis is mainstreamed across all early warning and conflict prevention efforts;

– strengthening its sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response activities in line with resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#), including by assisting the parties with activities consistent with resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#), and by ensuring that risks of sexual and gender-based violence are included in the Mission's data collection and threat analysis and early warning systems by engaging in an ethical manner with survivors and victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and women's organizations;

– implementing resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and all resolutions addressing women, peace, and security, including by seeking to increase the number of women in MINUSCA in line with resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#), as well as to ensure the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of operations, including by ensuring safe, enabling and gender-sensitive working environments for women in peacekeeping operations, taking fully into account gender considerations as a crosscutting issue throughout its mandate, and reaffirming the importance of uniformed and civilian gender advisors, gender focal points in all mission components, gender expertise and capacity strengthening in executing the mission mandate in a gender-responsive manner;

– implementing the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on serious misconduct, sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment, and all actions under resolution [2272 \(2016\)](#), and to report to the Security Council if such cases of misconduct occur;

43. *Urges* troop- and police-contributing countries to continue taking appropriate action to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, including vetting of all personnel, predeployment and in-mission awareness training, to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel, including through timely investigations of all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by troop- and police-contributing countries to hold perpetrators accountable, to repatriate units when there is credible evidence of widespread or systemic sexual exploitation and abuse by those units, and to report to the United Nations fully and promptly on actions undertaken;

47. *Requests* MINUSCA to take fully into account gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and to assist the CAR authorities in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation, involvement and representation of women, including survivors of sexual violence, in all spheres and at all levels, including in the political and reconciliation process and the mechanisms established for the implementation of the APPR, stabilization activities, transitional justice, the work of

the SCC and of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission, SSR and DDDR processes, the preparation and holding of the local elections through, inter alia, the provision of gender advisers, and *requests* troop- and police-contributing countries to implement relevant provisions of resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#) and all other relevant resolutions on reducing barriers to and increasing women's participation at all levels and in all positions in peacekeeping, including by ensuring safe, enabling and gender-sensitive working environments for women in peacekeeping operations;

58 *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council on 15 February 2022, 15 June 2022 and 14 October 2022, including on (...) information on the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse as outlined in paragraphs 42 and 43;

### **Relevant language in resolution 2605 (2021) raising the troop ceiling of MINUSCA**

*Condemning* in the strongest terms violations of the Political Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR ("The Peace Agreement") and violence perpetrated by armed groups and other militias, including violence aiming at obstructing the electoral process, incitement to ethnic and religious hatred and violence, violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses, including those committed against children and those involving sexual and gender-based violence in conflict, as well as violence directed at civilians from specific communities, resulting in deaths, injuries and displacements,

*Welcoming* the roadmap for dialogue proposed by President Touadéra (...) *reiterating* that only inclusive, free, fair, transparent, credible, peaceful and timely elections, undisturbed by disinformation and other forms of manipulation of information, can bring lasting stability to the CAR, including through the full, equal and meaningful participation of women (...),

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that decisions regarding deployment of all personnel to MINUSCA adhere to:

- (iii) implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women, peace, and security, including by seeking to increase the number of women in MINUSCA in line with resolution 2538 (2020), and requests further that such deployment ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of operations;
- (iv) the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse as well as to the provisions of resolution 2272 (2016);