

Speech by H.E. Ms Karen Van Vlierberge,
Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative

to the United Nations Security Council

Security Council briefing on the CAR

New York, 20 June 2019

Mr President,

Today, I would like to highlight three points:

Firstly, the political agreement

We welcomed this political agreement and we support this political process, which is the only acceptable way out of the crisis in the country.

The people of the Central African Republic no longer want violence, and this message must be heard by the leaders of armed groups. These groups are signatories to the Agreement and must now honour their commitments. This means putting an end to the violence and cycles of reprisals, such as that which recently led to the Paoua massacre, which we condemn. Those responsible must be brought to justice. Armed groups must also cease their predatory activities, human rights violations such as the recruitment of children, and unauthorised troop movements.

Armed groups must be aware that serious violations of the Agreement will have consequences.

We welcome the establishment of the prefectural implementation committees and the technical safety committees, which are encouraging signs of the

parties' commitment. The operationalisation of the Special Mixed Security Units is a major challenge; given the magnitude of the task, it is fortunate that the European Union was able to quickly provide financial support.

Secondly, national ownership

The Central African authorities naturally have a role to play in the implementation of the Agreement. Belgium welcomes the launch of the National Implementation Committee on 14 June. The national disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme, for its part, is crucial for supporting the dissolution of armed groups. The expectations of the people are high, and commensurate with the suffering they have endured in recent years. The lack of access to health services, education, economic development opportunities and justice, and especially the lack of security, are undermining the ownership of the peace agreement by the people of the Central African Republic, particularly those living outside the capital.

Fortunately, the CAR is not alone in facing these challenges. It can count on the support of the international community, including the European Union. It must also rely on the guarantors of the Political Agreement, namely the countries of the region, ECCAS and the African Union. We encourage President Touadéra to continue his talks in order to establish strong partnerships with neighbouring countries, in particular by reactivating the joint committees.

With regard to justice, we believe that the fight against impunity does not contradict the implementation of the political agreement; in fact, the search for justice is an integral part of the reconciliation process.

Thirdly, MINUSCA

Lastly, we must recognise that MINUSCA is also facing significant challenges. The very serious incidents of recent months have shown that its mandate to protect civilians remains cruelly relevant. In addition to the deployment of the Central African Armed Forces, MINUSCA must now supervise the deployment of the Special Mixed Security Units. We still believe it is appropriate to consider increased logistical support from MINUSCA for these deployments.

MINUSCA also has a crucial role to play in providing assistance and support to the peace process and in supporting the extension of State authority and security sector reform. Good coordination between all CAR partners is a key factor for success. In our view, MINUSCA can contribute to this coherence.

The proximity of the elections is also a factor to be taken into account in the peace process. We call on the political leaders of the Central African Republic not to rekindle tensions between communities for electoral purposes. We believe that MINUSCA will have a major role to play in supporting the organisation of the elections.

In conclusion, Mr President, I would like to congratulate Special Representative Mankeur Ndiaye for the dynamism with which he has set to work; I would like to assure him of Belgium's full support.

Thank you.