



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Intervention of

S.E.M. Karen Van Vlierberge, Deputy Permanent Representative of
Belgium to the UN

**Briefing/consultations/VTC MINUSCA
UN Security Council**

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Mister President,

Belgium thanks the briefers.

We welcome the Central African Republic's rapid and measured response to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and are mindful of the additional stress this pandemic places on the country's population and institutions. In order to tackle this pandemic more efficiently, however, there is a need to reinforce internal solidarity and coordination and a need to improve coordination with international partners, including the European Union. We also salute MINUSCA's efforts aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in line with its mandate in these challenging circumstances.

However, covid-19 should not distract from the need to fully implement the peace agreement. We welcome the adoption of the law creating the Commission on Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation, which will facilitate the country's transitional justice process. All parties must commit themselves to the peace process and prioritize efforts to the full and proper implementation of the peace agreement, through dialogue. Violations of the agreement are unacceptable and should not remain unchallenged. Appropriate measures should be considered, as foreseen by the agreement itself. Attacks on civilians, including crimes of sexual violence, and attacks on humanitarian staff and on UN staff, are unacceptable. In this regard, we remind spoilers that this Council can also impose sanctions, as it did very recently.

The DDR process and efforts to reform the security sector have to continue, with the help of MINUSCA, and the European mission EUTM and EUAM. Progress on the operationalisation of the *Unités spéciales mixtes de sécurité* also remains essential. In this regard, we believe it is important to continue efforts to establish the next unit in the North East as soon as the security situation allows it.

Finally, we see the upcoming legislative and presidential elections as an important milestone in the peace process. Only a peaceful, inclusive and transparent process will make them credible and can pave the way towards the sustainable stabilization and democratization of the Central African Republic. We welcome the progress made by the government to organize these elections in line with the electoral calendar and call all political actors to respect the democratic process and refrain from disinformation, hate speech or other destabilization attempts. We believe it is important to maintain the planned electoral calendar and have full confidence that

these elections can be organized in a smooth and timely manner. It is why the EU is ready to shoulder almost half of the expected costs of the elections. We call on all partners of the Central African Republic to follow suit and mobilize additional resources for the organisation of these important elections.

Thank you.