
Open VTC

- I would like to thank SRSF Fall for his briefing and the latest report. They both clearly demonstrate that ONUCA's work in Central Africa is still very relevant.
- I would also like to take this opportunity to raise three points:

(a) Belgium remains concerned about the situation in **Cameroon**.

While we are pleased with some of the progress towards dialogue and decentralisation in the north-west and south-west of Cameroon, the boycott of the local elections on 6/12 last year is a matter of concern. We call on all stakeholders to exercise restraint in monitoring regional elections.

The implementation of the recommendations arising from the dialogue and the continuation of this dialogue with all parties, remain essential to building sustainable peace and development.

Furthermore, Belgium is appealing to all parties to support the call by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the African Union for a comprehensive ceasefire. In this regard, we remain particularly concerned about the conflict's negative impact on women and children, forced displacement and human rights violations. Given the number of cases of recruitment and use, killings and malicious injuries, kidnappings, attacks on schools and hospitals and denial of access to humanitarian aid in Cameroon, we welcome the SG's addition of Cameroon to the list of countries in which the situation is of concern in his next Report on Children and Armed Conflict.

International humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights must be fully respected. In this context, we are particularly worried about the continuing escalation of attacks and kidnappings of aid workers and members of the clergy. The protection of United Nations personnel and any other relevant humanitarian actors must be guaranteed.

- (b) UNOCA's added value lies particularly in its early warning system and its coverage of regional issues - especially **climate change** and **terrorism**.

In this respect, we would specifically like to applaud ONUCA's integration of climate security into its conflict analysis. The adoption of a sub-regional regulation on pastoralism and transhumance will therefore be of the utmost importance in order to prevent and mitigate conflicts between farmers and herders.

We also welcome ONUCA's many reports on terrorism, both in terms of Boko Haram and regarding other contexts in Central Africa. It is therefore crucial that the lessons learned and the good practices of ONUCA can be useful in other situations on the African continent where terrorism is simmering, particularly in Mozambique.

- (c) Finally, we want to focus briefly on the situation in **Burundi**. The elections have turned a page and we are now ready to begin writing a new chapter. In its presidential statement last week, this Council took note of the improved security situation in Burundi and the six main priorities outlined by President Ndayishimiye in his inaugural address of 18 June 2020. Progress has been made, but there are still challenges. These include, but are not limited to, the return of refugees, a problem identified in the latest UNOCA report. However, they also include continued work on the President's 6th priority in terms of human rights and sustainable peace and reconciliation. Belgium remains ready to work with the Burundian people and their Government on this important issue.

- I thank you for your attention.

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