

Building the peace and stability that Central Africans deserve

Thank you Mr President, and also thank you to our briefers. I thought the briefings today were particularly insightful and clear.

Mr President, while it is good to hear that security has broadly improved in some areas over the past six months, I'd like to start by offering my condolences to the families of those killed in the attacks by members of the RRR group near Pahoua on 21 May. Violence such as this perpetrated by members of armed groups who signed the peace agreement demonstrates a flagrant disregard for the integrity of the peace process.

The United Kingdom fully supports the peace process in the Central African Republic just as we supported the African Union-led peace agreement on which it is founded. I again congratulate the African Union for their leadership and their ongoing work. It is vital that we all send our clear and unambiguous backing for a peace agreement and the peace process. With coordinated and sustained international support in particular from the region, the Central African Republic can achieve long lasting peace and stability. We call on all armed groups to cease all forms of violence and to engage in the implementation of the peace agreement.

We also reiterate the Secretary-General's call to reinforce local peace and reconciliation committees which offer agency to women members of civil society, religious leaders and youth. As we know Mr President from many conflicts in this chamber, an inclusive peace agreement is more likely to be a sustainable peace agreement. It is vital that the Central African people feel ownership for the peace agreement and its implementation. We need to see built a better understanding of the peace process, taking into account the views and needs of Central Africans.

Mr President, there can be no peace without justice. Incitement to violence including on religious and ethnic grounds and attacks on civilians peacekeepers and humanitarian workers will, I'm afraid, continue if perpetrators are not held to account. Accountability – again, as we've seen in so many conflicts – is vital if the people of the Central African Republic are to see peace and stability in their country.

The United Kingdom recognises the efforts by the government of the Central African Republic, together with MINUSCA and UNDP to bring some of the perpetrators of serious crimes to account. In particular we welcome the progress made in establishing the Special Criminal Court and initiating the first investigations. And we note that the court is conducting a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of its mandate. But more needs to be done. and we urge the Central African Republic to work with the international community to expedite progress on transitional justice – an essential component for peace and stability.

Mr President, more than one in four Central Africans are displaced and half of the population is in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. The United Kingdom is committed to supporting the humanitarian situation in CAR and has provided over \$140 million worth of funding since 2014 in this regard. However in 2018, only 36 per cent of the humanitarian response plan was funded. A stable secure and peaceful CAR remains in all of our interests and we encourage all member states to help fill the gap.

Mr President, the United Kingdom fully supports the work of minister and is committed to working with the Security Council in support of ministries stabilisation mandate. We support the Secretary-General's observation that there should be a renewed focus on the peace process with MINUSCA's participation and more responsibility taken by the guarantors and facilitators of the peace agreement. Enhanced UN political engagement will support political, peace building and security efforts in the Central African Republic. And I want to today pay tribute to all the work done by me by MINUSCA and send our thanks via the Special Representative to those who represent this Council in blue on the ground.

We also though need clear communications to the people of the Central African Republic to show them and help them understand how much MINUSCA is delivering to them. To conclude Mr President, the international community and their government the Central African Republic are making progress towards implementing key elements of the peace agreement. But there is much at stake; We must continue to focus on building peace, stability and create the conditions for safe and credible elections in 2020 which will help us get to the long term protection and prosperity that the people of CAR deserve.

Thank you Mr President.