

Central African Republic: UN urges calm in wake of violence in capital Bangui

The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (CAR) has appealed for calm following fresh violence in the capital Bangui which claimed the lives of several civilians, including a religious leader.

“MINUSCA [the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR] condemns attacks against civilians and places of worship and emphasizes that such attacks are contrary to national and international laws,” the UN Mission said in a [statement](#).

It reaffirmed that only mandated State authorities have the right to enforce justice and that any acts by non-state actors, such as the attacks Tuesday morning, are illegal.

“The sponsors and the perpetrators of such acts will be held responsible,” added the Mission.

The clashes were sparked off by the arrest of a member of a criminal group by the country’s security forces. In the ensuing violence, a church was attacked on the edge of the predominantly Muslim PK5 neighbourhood, and a pastor was killed. Health facilities and medical staff were also reportedly threatened.

The violence later spread to other parts of the city.

The Humanitarian Coordinator in the CAR, Najat Rochdi, [denounced](#) the targeting of a religious institution by attackers, saying that it demonstrated a lack of respect due to all places of worship.

“I am shocked by the death of Father Tougoumalé-Baba who was one of the defenders of the pact of non-aggression,” she said, recalling that the agreement enables Muslims in the surrounding area to give their dead a befitting burial according to the precepts of Islam.

Also in a subsequent attack, two MINUSCA peacekeepers were wounded – one seriously – after they were reportedly pelted with stones by a crowd.

In accordance with its mandate, MINUSCA has deployed reinforced patrols to secure key locations in Bangui in close cooperation with the national security forces and is monitoring the situation.

It has also strengthened its presence in other parts of the country.