

UN agency condemns attack on staff in Central African Republic town

4 July 2017 – Strongly condemning an attack against its staff and premises in a northern town of the Central African Republic (CAR), the United Nations refugee agency has underscored the importance of safety of aid workers for them to be able to help civilian populations in desperate need.

At about 5 PM on 1 July, unidentified armed men entered the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) premises in Kaga Bandoro town, [threatened staff at gun point, and looted all goods and money](#) on site, Andrej Mahecic, a spokesperson for the UN agency told the media at a regular news briefing in Geneva today.

There were six UN staff members (four from UNHCR and two from the [UN Development Programme](#)) at the premises and they were also robbed of their belongings, including personal items and passports.

“Since the attack, UNHCR has temporarily relocated staff to the [MINUSCA](#) (the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR) base in Kaga Bandoro, and we will be moving some to [the capital,] Bangui,” added Mr. Mahecic.

Also in the town, on the night of 28 June, [unidentified armed men tried to break](#) into a UNHCR accommodation, with the intention of attacking staff and looting belongings. That attack was thwarted by MINUSCA forces.

Frequent violence in Kaga Bandoro – located about 350 kilometers (220 miles) north of Bangui – has had a significant impact on the local population, displacing many and leaving them in need of humanitarian assistance.

In CAR, UNHCR has been providing protection and relief support to more than 8,600 refugees and 503,000 internally displaced persons.

Clashes between the mainly Muslim Séléka rebel coalition and anti-Balaka militia, which are mostly Christian, have plunged the country of about 4.5 million people into civil conflict since 2013. In addition to those displaced within the CAR, more than 484,000 people from the country have been forced to seek refuge in neighboring nations.