

UN chief condemns attacks against peacekeepers in Central African Republic

The United Nations chief has condemned the latest killing and wounding of the world body's peacekeepers in the Central African Republic during an exchange of fire with armed groups on 10 April.

A statement issued overnight by UN Spokesman, Stéphane Dujarric, said that Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, recalling that attacks against UN peacekeepers "may constitute a war crime," called on the country's authorities to [investigate them](#) and swiftly bring those responsible to justice.

A Rwandan peacekeeper serving the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was killed and eight others of the mission were injured during the incident in the capital, Bangui.

The incident followed a joint operation launched on 8 April by MINUSCA and the Central African forces and police to disarm and arrest heavily armed criminal groups, Mr. Dujarric said, noting that the Secretary-General offered his deepest condolences to the family of the bereaved, as well as to the Government of Rwanda, and wished a swift recovery to the injured.

The Central African Republic has been [plagued by decades of instability and fighting](#). A renewed violence erupted in December 2012 when the mainly Muslim Séléka rebel coalition launched a series of attacks. A peace agreement was reached in January 2013, but the rebels seized the capital, Bangui, in March, forcing President François Bozizé to flee.

A transitional government has since been established and entrusted with restoring peace. The conflict, however, has taken on increasingly sectarian overtones as the mainly Christian anti-Balaka movement took up arms and inter-communal clashes erupted again in and around Bangui.