

UN peacekeeping chief warns Security Council about insecurity in Central African Republic

28 July 2017 – The head of the United Nations peacekeeping operations has warned that the increased intensity of attacks on civilians and peacekeepers is bringing Central African Republic (CAR) to the tipping point.

Addressing the Security Council in a closed-door session, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, yesterday cited the [worsening security and humanitarian](#) situation in Bangassou, in the south-eastern part of the country, where three UN peacekeepers have been killed in recent days.

The attacks took place against the backdrop of sustained fighting in the south-east of the country, heightened inter-ethnic tensions and efforts by spoilers to manipulate communities along religious lines and undermine the stabilization process in the country, Mr. Lacroix told the 15-member Council, according to a note from the UN Spokesperson's Office.

Mr. Lacroix is scheduled to travel to the CAR over the weekend to convey a message of support to the UN stabilization mission known by its French acronym, MINUSCA, and to meet with national authorities.

In his address yesterday, Mr. Lacroix also raised concerns about the deteriorating security in the border town of Zemio, 290 km east of Bangassou, with the risk of further clashes between the Muslim community and elements affiliated with anti-Balaka, which had already led to the displacement of more than 22,000 civilians.

He also mentioned that the security situation in the town of Bria, in the north of the country, remains fragile and that the departure of the Ugandan and American forces from the eastern part of the country this spring has created a vacuum leading to the emergence of hostile 'self-defence' groups.

The violence has led to a worsening humanitarian situation in the country, with the numbers of internally displaced persons up about 40 per cent since last year.

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 2012. According to the UN some 2.3 million people, over half the population, [in dire need of assistance](#). In addition to those displaced within the CAR, more than 484,000 people from the country have been forced to seek refuge in neighbouring nations.

The senior UN official also reiterated that a military solution to the

problem of the armed groups will not suffice to address the root causes of the conflict: ¶8220The absence of tangible progress in the peace process risks further worsening the situation.¶8221

He noted the importance of operationalizing the July 17 roadmap by the members of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation and underlined the importance of prioritizing the implementation of the ceasefire agreed upon in the Rome agreement of 20 June.