

High-level UN representatives travel to Central African Republic

Bangui/ New York, 17 December – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui and the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, are travelling to the Central African Republic (CAR) from 17 to 21 December to assess the impact of the conflict on the civilian population, especially on women and children. The delegation will also include Nancee Oku Bright representing the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The mission will conduct field visits and hold consultations with the Transitional Authorities of CAR, representatives of regional organizations in Bangui, the diplomatic community, faith-based organizations, civil society, the humanitarian community and United Nations officials working in the country.

The security, human rights and humanitarian situation in CAR continues to deteriorate. The United Nations has received reports of widespread violations of human rights, including summary executions, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, sexual violence and looting of property, including hospitals, schools and churches. Women and children are particularly affected by the conflict. It is estimated that 2.3 million children are affected by the crisis and at least 3,500 children have been recruited by armed groups.

During a visit to CAR by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict in December 2012, the Government signed two Joint Communiqués with the United Nations which included commitments to fight impunity for crimes of sexual violence, ensuring the protection of women, boys and girls from sexual violence in the context of an effective monitoring of the peace agreement, and greater support for services to survivors. The implementation of these commitments remains integral to combating conflict-related sexual violence in CAR.

The sectarian attacks and tensions between communities has destabilized and complicated the situation further. Urgent action is necessary to protect the civilian population, particularly women and children.

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