

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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REMARKS AT PRESS CONFERENCE ON DEPARTURE

Bangui, 5 April 2014

Mbi bala ala kwe.

I am concluding a very moving visit to the Central African Republic. I thank the leaders and people of this country for their welcome.

I am encouraged by the resolve of the new Head of the Transition and her team.

I have come here on my way to Rwanda for a reason. I want to shine a spotlight on what is happening here.

I leave here with three messages.

The first is to the people of this country: You are not alone.

The United Nations is honoured to be by your side.

I want to express my profound sympathies to all those who lost loved ones in the appalling violence.

Today I met with many who have been forced to leave their homes and communities. Their stories will stay with me forever.

I want to reassure young and old, women and men, Muslims and Christians – that I will not forget you.

I have heard you. I support your calls for security and justice to be at the centre of reconciliation.

The UN Commission of Inquiry and other efforts will help address accountability and prevent further appalling human rights violations.

My second message is to the world: Do not look away. Do not ignore what is happening here.

I am pleased that the European Union will be deploying forces. I thank the French and African Union troops for their lifesaving efforts.

But CAR needs more. And it needs it now.

The country is at risk of partition – destabilizing an already fragile region.

The Security Council is about to authorise the deployment of a new UN peacekeeping mission for the CAR. But peacekeepers alone cannot provide the answer to all the challenges.

Success will require a strong commitment to peace from Central Africans themselves and close coordination among all partners.

The blue helmets will not arrive right away. We need to work together for security today while laying the groundwork for longer term peace and stability tomorrow.

My third and final message is simply this: There is hope.

Despite the difficulties, I know that the people of the Central African Republic can have what they rightfully deserve – a future of security and opportunity.

We have seen such transformations happen in other war torn countries. Sierra Leone. Timor-Leste. Liberia.

But this won't happen by itself.

It will take the commitment of the people of this country and the international community to pull together to make it happen.

You have my full support.

We have an opportunity and an obligation to act – and to act now.

Sin gila mingi.

Thank you.