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Security Council

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SECURITY COUNCIL PRESS STATEMENT ON CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The following press statement was issued today by Security Council President Vitaly Churkin (Russian Federation):

The members of the Security Council heard a report by Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, on the situation in the Central African Republic.

The members of the Security Council strongly condemned the recent attacks and the seizure of power by force in the Central African Republic on 24 March 2013 by the Seleka coalition, as well as the ensuing violence and looting. They also condemned the use of force, causing inter alia the deaths of and injuries to soldiers from the South Africa training contingent deployed in the Central African Republic at the request of the Government.

The members of the Security Council noted the decision of the African Union's Peace and Security Council dated 25 March to suspend the participation of the Central African Republic in all the activities of the African Union and the decision taken by this organization against the Seleka leaders whose action violated the Libreville agreements and jeopardized the precarious stability in the Central African Republic.

The members of the Security Council called on all parties to refrain from any acts of violence against civilians, including foreign communities, to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access consistent with international law, and to fully respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law. They emphasized that those responsible for violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law including violence against civilians, sexual and gender-based violence and recruitment and use of children in armed conflict must be held accountable. They recalled that such violations of international humanitarian law may amount to crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, to which the Central African Republic is a State party. They called on all parties to exercise the utmost restraint and called for respect for persons and property.

The members of the Security Council called for the restoration of the rule of law, constitutional order, and the implementation of the Libreville agreements, as they represent the framework for political transition and the basis for a peaceful solution. They recalled that according to the political agreement signed in Libreville, the Government of National unity is in charge of holding legislative elections. They reaffirmed the important role of the Economic Community of the Central African States in facilitating the implementation of the Libreville agreements with the support of the African Union.

The members of the Security Council expressed their intention to monitor closely the situation and, if required, to consider further steps.

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