

Secretary-General's first press conference of the year (transcript)

Excerpt from the opening statement relating to the Central African Republic

“...In the Central African Republic, we must strengthen the African-led mission and do more to prevent the spiral of violence from spreading.

“Earlier today, the President of the Transition and the Prime Minister resigned. I take note of their decision. I urge all political actors in the country to work urgently to restore security and law and order, and to address the root causes of the persisting instability. ...”

Excerpts from the questions and answers session relating to the Central African Republic

Q: Secretary-General, you touched on the Central African Republic and the stepping down of the interim leader, Mr. [Michel] Djotodia. Do you see this as a positive move for peace and security and reconciliation in that country? How do you view today's development?

SG: The situation in Central African Republic has really been source of great concern for the international community. Upon decision by Security Council, the African Union regional group has deployed MISCA [the International Support Mission in the Central African Republic] and the French Government has deployed its own troops. Even with all [this] support, the situation has been deteriorating. First of all, the 6,000-mandated ceiling has not yet been filled and I urge the African Union to expedite the full deployment of these soldiers.

At the same time, there are serious human rights and humanitarian situations there. I think almost half, two million people – the total population is about 4 million people – then about two million people have been affected. At least one million people in [the country] are now displaced and there are serious human rights violations. We are now strengthening our human rights violations [teams]. The United Nations are fully committed to help the Central African Republic emerge from this terrible crisis and to build peace.

In that regard, this announcement of resignation of transitional President Djotodia and also Prime Minister [Nicolas] Tiangaye -- I know that this is a decision of themselves, upon the discussions of the regional countries in N'Djamena yesterday. It's going on. And I have taken note of it. I sincerely hope that there will be quick restoration of institutions. There is no functioning government, unfortunately. There is a limit for the international community and the United Nations when there is no functioning government, no functioning institutions. Then there should be a full and quick restoration of institutions there. And we will continue to provide humanitarian assistance, despite the very difficult and dire situation.

10 January 2013, New York