

ROADMAP FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

1. Introduction and context

1.1 The Central African Republic has been for several decades engaged in serious political-military crises, calling into question the foundations of the State. Since the return to constitutional legality with the election of President of the Republic, Head of State, Pr. Faustin Archange TOUADERA, the Central African Republic has resolved to seek peace, restoration of the state's authority, justice system, economy, and general social reconstruction.

1.2 The presence of the United Nations peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA), which took over from that of the African Union (MISCA), has played a very important role in the stabilization of the country, the defense of Democratic institutions, and protection of civilians. However, the armed groups have continued to spread over large areas, and in certain cases have even strengthened, thereby leading the country to a de-facto separation, wherein there is a lack of State authority over the entire national territory, as well as a real process for reconciliation in the country.

1.3 In spite of the volatility of the security situation in a large part of the national territory, President TOUADERA, in his desire to concretize his first priority, namely the restoration of peace throughout the country, has formulated his wise policy, extending his hand to all countries' sons and daughters. He called on his African brothers and CAR friends to support the Central African people in this quest for peace. It is in response to this, and in order to translate into reality the solidarity between the Government and the Central African people, that the African initiative was born.

1.4 In spite of the efforts made and the Government's firm will to promote a structured dialogue with the armed groups, it is clear that the violence between these groups has increased. This exacerbates community tensions, and brings the loss of human lives, as well as massive displacement of populations, including to neighboring countries.

1.5 Thus, during a meeting between President Faustin Archange TOUADERA and his Chadian counterpart, President Idriss DEBY ITNO, in Ndj'amena, on November 10 2016, it was decided to entrust to the African Union (AU) the task of finding an agreement between the Central African Government and the armed groups. On November 30, 2016 in Libreville, the Heads of State and of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), meeting in an Extraordinary Summit, decided to support this initiative to be led by the AU in close collaboration with ECCAS as well as the United Nations and other partners.

1.6 Following discussions between the Central African authorities and the Secretary General of ECCAS, during a mission to Bangui from 09 to 11 December 2016 on the implementation methods of this African initiative, the AU and ECCAS Representatives in the CAR have made preliminary contacts with certain Central African armed groups. In this vein, the Republic of Angola, which is presiding over the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), has also in December 2016 begun to take similar steps with some armed groups in the CAR.

1.7 Faced with this situation, and with a view to ensuring greater harmony and coherence between the various components of the African Initiative, President TOUADERA launched an appeal for the solidarity of the International Community. This was once again shown through the revitalization of commendable initiatives such as the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, under the auspices of the African Union, the Community of Central African States, the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region, and with the added support of Angola,

Congo, Gabon, and Chad since the African Union Summit took place from 30 to 31 January 2017.

1.8 It is with this development that the Chairman of the AU Commission Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General in mid-February 2017 asking for full support for the Initiative. In response to this letter, the United Nations has declared its strong political, technical, and logistical support for the Initiative. In this regard, MINUSCA has set up a team that works in tandem with that of the AU in Bangui. The United Nations Mediation Support Unit also deployed a Mediation Expert in March 2017 to support the efforts of the Initiative's Promoters.

1.9 The Government of the Central African Republic, under the strong impetus of President of the Republic, Head of State, Pr. Faustin Archange TOUADERA, unequivocally reaffirms its full support for the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation, which is a concrete expression of African solidarity with the Central African people in their quest for peace.

1.10 The Central African people are waiting for support to the African Initiative to materialize in strict compliance with the resolutions and recommendations of the Bangui National Forum, in particular those of the Republican Pact for Peace, Reconciliation and Reconstruction in

CAR as well as the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

1.11 If Africa embraces this Initiative, its success requires that all parties be involved. Thus, the UN, through the MINUSCA, the European Union (DE) and the International Organization of La

Francophonie (01 F) must not be left behind by this Initiative, to which they formally expressed their support through a joint AU / ECCAS declaration in February 2017 on the situation in the CAR.

1.12. Following the discussions held in Brussels on 21 June 2017, the Government of the Central African Republic wishes to express in the clearest and most solemn manner its vision of the peace process to be reflected by the African Initiative, ensuring it is the only roadmap that will lead to peace and national reconciliation in the Central African Republic. Thus, the Government of the Central African Republic, while adhering to this initiative, shares its relevant proposals with a view to ensuring the coordination of all partners in the quest for peace, through a frank and sincere dialogue with the armed groups. This will lay the groundwork for future discussions to consolidate peace in the CAR.

1.13. The previous two strategies from the Government of the CAR and other components of the African initiative namely the African Union, ECCAS, ICGLR, with the support of Angola, Congo, Gabon and Chad, are combined into a single plan, in the Roadmap for National Peace and Reconciliation

in the Central African Republic. This Roadmap will be implemented by the

Government of the Central African Republic and be the responsibility of the International Support Group for the Central African Republic (GIS-RCA). The African initiative also seeks the support of the United Nations, the OIF, the European Union, the United States of America, France, Italy, and all other partners of the Central African Republic.

1.14 The Roadmap for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic aims to provide a glimpse into the practical realities of its implementation. It sets out its objectives and expected results, identifies the parties concerned, and presents the strategy for bringing the all elements together in order to reach a global peace agreement. It incorporates mechanisms of coordination, information sharing among the various parties, as well as outlining a dialogue process. It also constitutes, after validation by the FUA Authorities, a decision between the Parties who are committed to the principles mentioned above.

2. Objectives of the peace efforts and expected results

2.1 The Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic

has a general objective of promoting dialogue between the Central African Republic Government

and the armed groups that have joined the Advisory and Monitoring Committee (CCS) of DORR with a view to reaching a peace and reconciliation agreement. This will create the conditions necessary for complete disarmament of the groups, strengthening of the Constitutional and Democratic Orders embodied by the President of the Republic and the National Assembly from the general elections of 2015 and 2016, as well as the voluntary inclusion of the armed groups in the process for national reconstruction.

2.2. The specific results expected as part of the peace efforts contained in the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, include the following elements:

- (a) Agreement on practical arrangements for the implementation of the relevant conclusions of the 2015 Bangui Forum, both in terms of the recognition and equal treatment of all the components of the Central African Nation, and with regard to the fair socio-economic development of the country in order to reduce disparities between the different regions;
- (b) The implementation of the DORR process within the framework of the work of the DDRR / RN / RSS, the Technical Committees, and the Advisory and Monitoring Committee in which the representatives of the 14 armed groups sit. These actions, which will be based on the principles of fraternity, justice, inclusion, and national cohesion, will revolve around the voluntary demobilization and integration of eligible members of the armed groups in the socio-economical and security elements of the State and the Central African society;
- (c) the development of political and security conditions conducive to the strengthening of State authority and the deployment of administrative structures throughout the national territory;
- (d) the establishment of a mechanism for the implementation of the agreement and the monitoring of field activities, in cooperation with the established state structures and the necessary technical and logistical support of the African and international community;
- e) the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms to strengthen the process of national reconciliation, taking into account the victims and valuing the reinvigoration of living together in the local community.

3. Guiding principles

3.1. In order to foster a necessary climate for the successful implementation of the dialogue process, the Central African crisis stakeholders commit themselves to

complying with the following guiding principles:

a) The respect of the Constitution of the Central African Republic of March 30, 2016, as well as the constitutional order and the legitimacy of the country's current democratic institutions;

(b) Commitment to promoting constructive dialogue, in good faith and in the spirit of compromise, putting national interest above all other aspects, and respecting the national unity and territorial integrity of the CAR;

(c) Commitment to ensuring a successful structured dialogue with the armed groups, through the implementation of the relevant conclusions of the Bangui Forum and the Agreement on the Principles of DORR and Integrity in the Uniformed Services;

(d) Recognition that violence, force, and the use of weapons are not the solution to the many challenges facing the CAR, and therefore the commitment to a peaceful resolution to all matters.

(e) Ensuring the presumption of innocence of any individual who is suspected of committing serious crimes until he has been found guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction in the matter.

f) Commitment of the State to ensuring the protection of any individual duly mandated by one of the parties to participate in the peace process in the various structures set up.

(g) Recognition that impunity has never been a lasting solution to the recurrent crises in the CAR, and the commitment to acknowledging the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have taken place. In this regard, the commitment to considering relevant options, including those derived from the conceptual complex of transitional justice;

4. Concerned parties

4.1 For the Government of the Central African Republic, this coordinated peace process through the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic must be such as to support, consolidate, and assist the acceleration of ongoing discussions within the framework of the Advisory and Monitoring Committee of the DORR, which has just held its 6th session in Bangui, on June 30, 2017.

4.2 Stakeholders in this dialogue process are:

- The Government of the Central African Republic;

- Armed Groups in the DORR process.

4.3 Thus, the Brussels discussions are an opportunity to reaffirm the support of all of the CAR's partners in the dialogue between the Government and armed groups operating in the national territory, so that they remain resolutely committed to making the Advisory and Monitoring Committee a framework for peaceful dialogue.

4.4 Moreover, the Government is aware that the success of the peace efforts will be all the more guaranteed if parties other than the armed groups are consulted. Thus, the African Initiative will take into account the relevant proposals of the parliamentary initiative for peace, will solicit the contributions of political actors, consult the civil society of the Central African Republic, and will listen to the victims.

4.5 In terms of direct exchanges, the African initiative will establish, in agreement with the Government, a quota for its representatives as well as those of the armed groups, in consultation with the facilitators and on the basis of transparent criteria.

5. Facilitation and Coordination

5.1. In line with the structure of the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and with regard to the leadership of the Government in the implementation of this dialogue process, it will be facilitated and coordinated as follows:

A. Facilitation Panel

5.2 The Facilitation Panel will be provided by the International Support Group for

Central African Republic (GIS-CAR), composed of AU, ECCAS, ICGLR, Angola, Congo, Gabon, and Chad. This Panel will act collectively under the direction of the dedicated AU representative. The mission of the Panel is to:

- Convene meetings with stakeholders, moderate discussions, and chair plenary meetings between the Parties;

- Aid the quest for consensus and compromise between the Central African Parties and be permanently at their disposal to help overcome obstacles where appropriate:

- To observe and ensure respect for the guiding principles contained in the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, as well as to ensure the commitment and behavior of the Parties;
- To communicate the progress of the dialogue process, through the appropriate channels, to the institutions and civil society of the Central African Republic, the partners of the International Community, and the media.

5.3 The members of the Facilitation Panel will coordinate their actions with the National Coordination Focal Point.

B. Technical Committee

5.4 The Technical Committee provides the Facilitation Secretariat, composed of the members of the Facilitation Panel, with the support of MINUSCA and any other partners of the CAR. Under the authority of the Facilitators Panel, the Technical Committee's mission is to:

- Monitor the work of the panel and any ad hoc committees that may be set up;

- Ensure the preparation and availability of documentation for the panel and the Parties;
- To report on the panel's plenary meetings with the Parties;
- Contribute as much as necessary to the drafting of the overall dialogue Agreement;
- Perform other support tasks assigned by the Facilitation Panel.

C. National Coordination Focal Point

5.5 The Focal Point, a high-level official, will be appointed by the President of the Republic. The Focal Point will be responsible for coordinating with the Facilitation Panel and will report directly to the President of the Republic on the dialogue's progress.

6. Coordination and information sharing

6.1 The Facilitation Panel will inform the National Assembly, Political Parties, DDDR / RSS / RN Coordination, Religious Platforms, the Civil Society, and representatives of the international community, so as to ensure all parties have sufficient information. Arrangements will be made to establish communication channels between a group of international NGOs and the Central African media.

7. Agenda

7.1. The topics of discussion will revolve around, but not be limited to, the following themes:

A) Political and socio-economic issues

1- Draw relevant conclusions from the Bangui Forum and concrete measures for their implementation, including those on the issues of inclusion, political participation, and

fair representation of the different regions and communities in the executive body. However, it should be noted that there are prefectures which, today, continue to enjoy a period of respite which is favorable to development. It is essential that the government invest in these regions to reward those who have preserved peace and social harmony. This use of Government resources will further encourage these people to strive for peace. Thus, in addition to making the city of Bambari a model example for reinstating the State's authority, the Government of the Central African Republic proposes to its partners strong support for development efforts in prefectures.

2 - Reforms in administrative decentralization to allow for fair and balanced development of regions;

3 - Mechanism for the regulation and protection of transhumance;

4 - Status of the former Heads of State.

B) Security and defense issues

1 - DORR Program and concrete measures for its implementation on the basis of acquired knowledge;

2- Security measures during the DORR implementation period (including the establishment of local security units);

3- Mechanism for the gradual redeployment of defense and security forces across the country;

4- Principles and procedures for implementing the Security Sector Reform Program (SSR).

C) Justice, reconciliation and humanitarian issues;

1- Matters of justice and reparation for the victims;

2- Mechanisms for transitional justice and national reconciliation;

3- Practical socio-security measures for the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons,

8. Operational plan of the dialogue's rollout

8.1 The plan is based on the principle of flexibility. The Facilitators will be creative and will constantly take into consideration the circumstances, the environment, and political developments in the country, so as to adapt this scheme dynamically and appropriately throughout.

8.2 The process will take the form of both shuttle diplomacy and direct and collective meetings between the armed groups and the Government representatives, following the adoption of the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

9. Logistics and financial resources

9.1 The dialogue process will require significant logistical, human and financial resources. The GIS-RCA, the partner countries and all other partners will be asked to provide a good part of these resources. The Government of the CAR's contribution will be important to the African collective effort.

9.2 International partners are called upon to give their multifaceted support to the African Initiative. The logistical support of MINUSCA will be requested to facilitate the deployment and security of the facilitators as well as representatives of the Parties throughout the national territory.

9.3 A special fund will be created to receive the various contributions.

10. Success criteria

10.1. The success of this Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic will depend largely on a number of factors, including:

- a) The cessation of hostilities or any other act of war between the armed groups. The groups who do not follow these provisions, will be exposed to the relevant sanctions as decreed by international law;
- b) The strengthening of the will and commitment of the Parties to the dialogue,

who must prioritize this process and make the necessary concessions for its success:

c) The strengthening of the support of the international community and its commitment to encourage the implementation of other initiatives.

11. Timeline

11.1 The facilitation panel will establish an operational timeline for the implementation of the dialogue process.

12. FINAL PROVISIONS

12.1 The Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic comes into force when it is signed by the Parties, and constitutes the African Initiative which puts an end to all other initiatives, ensures the sharing of information the other peace players, and that takes into account the leadership of Government of the Central African Republic in the implementation of this process.

12.2 The "Agreement of Saint Edigio", written by the Political Agreement for Peace in the Central African Republic, is taken into account and integrated into the dialogue process defined by the Roadmap for Peace and National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic.

Done in Libreville on July 17th, 2017

Signatory parties

Heads of Delegation of the African Initiative

(In alphabetical order of countries)

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