



STATEMENT BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

Call for a global ceasefire towards an effective response to COVID-19 in Central Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic, which the world has been facing since the beginning of the year, does not spare Central Africa. I wish to express my support and encouragement to the medical staff for their dedication and sacrifices in the fight against this pandemic. Likewise, I welcome the measures taken by governments in the subregion to contain this public health crisis.

As we know, this deadly virus is spreading at an exponential rate while medical care for those infected remains complex and requires human, material and technical resources that are very limited in most countries in the subregion.

I am particularly concerned about the situation in rural and remote areas where adequate health care is not available, as well as in areas where, in addition, armed conflicts make it difficult, if not impossible, for those carrying out prevention and awareness campaigns to reach out to the populations and for COVID-19 patients to receive medical and humanitarian assistance.

Following the global call launched by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres on 23 March 2020, I would like to invite all conflicting parties in Central Africa, in particular in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to observe an immediate ceasefire to allow for the prompt and effective implementation of national response strategies in compliance with the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO). Together we must now fight this plague, which does not spare any combatants, civilians or political leaders.

It has become critical and vital to silence the guns in Central Africa to enable qualified people and structures, both governmental and nongovernmental, to provide the required assistance to the populations under threat.

I count on the conflicting parties' sense of humanity so that together we win the ongoing war against the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa

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