

Central African Republic: consultations between the Head of UNOCA and the Secretary General of ECCAS

Libreville (Gabon), 27 February 2014 - The crisis in Central African Republic (CAR) was at the heart of a working session of more than one hour and thirty minutes on Thursday 27 February between the Head of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), Mr. Abou Moussa, and the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi.

The two senior officials revisited the causes of the critical situation in the CAR and updated each other on the ongoing efforts to find a solution to the crisis. Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi welcomed the mobilization of the international community and, in particular, that of the United Nations, wishing that a UN special force be quickly put in place to address the current chaos. "We must not wait, because there is a problem of operational capability of our troops," he said, recognizing the sacrifices that the elements of the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) and those of the "Sangaris" operation are making to restore order and security in this ECCAS member country.

Meanwhile, the Secretary General of ECCAS supports the option of a "unified command with an Etat-Major at the United Nations Integrated Office for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic (BINUCA)." In his six-point initiative on CAR presented to the Security Council on 20 February, the UN Secretary-General underlined the need for such coordination. Mr. Ban Ki-moon explained that this approach would allow international forces to focus on the most urgent priorities: containing the violence; protecting civilians; preventing further displacements; creating a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance; and laying the groundwork for the handover to a United Nations peacekeeping force as soon as possible.

In this context, Mr. Abou Moussa reassured his host about the considerable attention of the UN Secretary-General on the Central African crisis. He highlighted the contribution of the specialized agencies of the United Nations in support of the victims, including refugees that have been welcomed by some neighboring countries. He indicated that they need additional financial resources to continue to respond properly to increasing expectations of populations and States. The Head of UNOCA, also Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Africa, took the opportunity to discuss the situation in Chad, where he has just completed an assessment on the regional impact of the crisis.

In the same vein, Mr. Abou Moussa also confirmed that he will visit Cameroon next week. He thanked Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi for agreeing that two experts from the Secretariat of ECCAS be part of this mission. Colleagues from BINUCA and from the United Nations System in Cameroon as well as from the UN Regional Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) based in Dakar (Senegal) will also participate.

The meeting between the Head of UNOCA and the Secretary General of ECCAS is part of their regular consultations. It was also an occasion to discuss several other issues of common interest such as the implementation of the decisions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) on maritime safety and security held in June 2013 in Yaoundé.