

## **Update on Key Events in the Central African Republic**

From 10 to 26 February 2020

### **Operations**

- **Repatriation movements**

UNHCR CAR has resumed its activities of voluntary repatriation of Central African refugees from the various countries of asylum. It is hosting a convoy of 250 people from the Lolo camp in Cameroon, today, 26 February 2020.



Voluntary repatriation of Central African refugees from Cameroon UNHCR

Also the last week, a convoy of 94 households including 151 returnees was welcomed at Bangui airport from Brazzaville. All these people received, after their arrival, monetary assistance and certificates of loss of documents for adults. UNHCR is also continuing preparations for the resumption of voluntary repatriation of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cameroon.

- Fire alerts in this dry season are becoming more and more recurrent at the various IDP sites, particularly in Kaga Bandoro, Batangafo and Bambari. These fires are sometimes due to poor handling of household fires. To minimize the risk of fire, UNHCR is currently conducting awareness campaigns at IDP sites. This awareness raising focused on the different mechanisms for fire management and strengthening the fire prevention strategy. In response, UNHCR provided assistance in complete

NFI kits to 26 fire-affected households at the Bambari livestock site.



Kaga-Bandero : le 16 /02/ 2020 au site de lazare, l'incendie provoqué par le feu de cuisson. 199 huttes et des biens appartenant aux Personnes déplacées ont été consumés. Photo UNHCR

- **M'boki and Zemio:** UNHCR, in partnership with the National Commission for Refugees (NRC), organized a verification and registration operation for refugees residing in Haut-Mbomou. This operation was carried out in two stages. The first stage took place in Obo with the effective update of the southern Sudanese and Congolese refugees. The second concerned the first level registration of southern Sudanese and Congolese refugees in Mboki.
- **Bambari :** UNHCR and its partner Intersos reshuffled the Site Steering Committee from 18 to 21 February 2020. Following the dissatisfaction of some IDPs calling for the renewal of the steering committee, four sites have been targeted for this activity this week. These are PK8, PK14, NDV and the Alternative site, where new leaders were elected and some of the old ones were renewed.
- **Paoua:** UNHCR carried out a protection monitoring mission on the Benamkor-Bebenguere axis. The main objective of this mission was to assess the level of social cohesion between the communities affected by incidents that led to the displacement of several people and, at the same time, to collect lists of those affected from the local authorities.
- **OBO:** UNHCR officially launched the capacity building workshop for managers and teachers-teachers of primary schools on 22 February 2020. 04 managers of the academic inspection and 40 teachers (including 14 women) will be trained on school hygiene, child psychology, mathematics, French, social and civic education, student evaluation, teaching pedagogy. This training will last 05 days for managers and 10 days for teacher-parents.

## Overview of the security situation

- **Birao** : The city has been threatened since the beginning of the year by an explosion of armed violence, Birao has finally given in to the sound of boots. On Sunday 16 February at around 5 a.m., a horde of armed men identified as members of the Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC) launched an assault on the city of Birao. The surprise attack and firepower allowed these men to advance to the vicinity of the Minusca base and the site of the displaced persons, gaining the upper hand over their rivals, elements of the Movement of Central African Liberators for Justice (MLCJ). The response of the joint Minusca-FACA force was automatic and repelled the attack."

It should be noted that the resumption of hostilities between the FPRC and the UPC, both signatories to the 6 February 2019 agreement, constitutes a violation of the implementation of the peace agreement. This violation of the agreement has prompted the reaction of the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which are the guarantors of the agreement. Representatives of these organizations have met the various parties to the conflict together with the Sultans of Birao and the authorities to resolve the crisis. As a result, the FPRC declared an immediate cessation of hostilities from the date of signature of this declaration and indicated its readiness to cooperate with UNMISSA, whose mandate is to protect the civilian population, particularly the internally displaced persons (IDPs) of Birao.

- **Bangui** : The security situation in Bangui is calm but unpredictable. Only in the morning of February 21, 2020, a demonstration by the temporary teachers took place in front of the National Assembly Palace. These teachers were expressing their dissatisfaction with the non-payment of their bonus. The demonstration disrupted traffic on Independence Avenue, no damage was reported.
- **N'délé**: UNHCR trucks carrying 1,450 NFIs and emergency kits were blocked and parked at the UNMISCA base in Ndélé as armed groups blocked the road to Birao. Community leaders, namely the Sultan, the Mayor, the Imam and UNMISSA are in negotiations with these armed groups to facilitate the passage of these trucks
- **Bria**: Weapons detonations are heard almost every night in the city. The latest cases date from the night of 20-21 February 2020, when automatic weapons fire was heard in the city centre, the fiefdom of Rounga, and in Bornou, the fiefdom of Goula. Several preventive pendulum movements of certain populations were observed in the city between the Bornou district, the PK3 site, the Piango and Ndomende districts, towards the Gobolo assembly point and the Bria hospital. For a resolution of the conflict, UNMISSA, the Islamic Committee, the religious platform and the local authorities of Bria, have started negotiations for the establishment of a dialogue between the armed groups since 27 January 2020. The mediation team has been blocked for almost a week due to the position of FPRC Rounga, which demands the restitution of property

looted by MLJC and its allies during the clashes of 25 and 26 January 2020, as a condition for any new dialogue. The same applies to the mediation initiated by the UPC with the belligerents.

- Following the incidents reported on the Ouadda axis, 19 households of 98 people arrived at the PK3 and Gobolo site from Pk 29, DAOUGA village. These arrivals bring the total number of IDPs recorded following the attacks in late January-early February 2020 to 1836 households of 10647 people at the assembly and Bria sites. These new IDPs are in addition to the 43,850 IDPs who were reported by the CMP in Bria in December 2019. Preliminary results of the profiling of the new IDPs indicate that children represent more than 57% and women 12% of those affected. In addition, there have been some pendulum movements and preventive displacements observed at assembly points and at the PK3 site due to tension and rumours of attacks between the belligerents in the town. The neighbourhoods affected by these movements are Bornou, Piango, Ndomende and Ndrou.

#### **Dans la zone OUEST (PAOUA, BOUAR & BERBERATI)**

- **PAOUA:** On 18/02/2020, a Peulh was abducted with his son by the 3R elements in the village Beboura 3 located 25 km on the eastern axis of Paoua. The Peulh was killed while his son escaped and informed the population of the neighbouring village of Begatara. The chief of that village in turn seized the FACA elements who went to the scene of the incident. This incident created psychosis among the population because of reprisals. On 19 February 2020, a Chadian gendarmerie team in search of stolen cattle in Chad aboard a vehicle transporting shepherds was escorted by the FACA to the town of Paoua. The purpose of their presence was to search for stolen cattle in the area of the village of Betokomia located 07km from Paoua on the northern axis. After these searches, they returned without incident.
- **Central Sector,** the security situation in Kaga Bandoro is quiet but unpredictable. Cases of robbery in the neighborhoods against homes are still common. In the course of the week a cohort of MPC elements armed with AK47s entered the town on about ten motorcycles and it is not known where they came from.
- **In the West zone,** the general security situation in the Prefecture and in Berberati is relatively calm but uncertain during this period of transhumance, when elements of armed groups continue to pursue their illegal activities in certain areas not controlled by the ISF. Our operations for the moment are proceeding without incident. It should also be noted that the temporary restriction on the Carnot-Baoro axis has been lifted. ▪ The security situation in the area of jurisdiction of the UNHCR Bouar sub-delegation has been relatively calm during the past week. This lull has raised hopes for a gradual return to normalcy throughout Sector West and free movement on the MSR1.
- **In the East Zone** In Obo, on 20 February 2020, several community leaders and members of the Mboki peace committee were arrested by UPC elements, following their appeal to the

authorities of Obo, for the disarmament of some armed elements of the LRA who appeared on 13 February 2020 in this locality. These leaders are still under UPC arrest.

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