



# Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

**8828**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 29 July 2021, 10.10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

---

<i>President:</i>	Mr. De Rivière . . . . .	(France)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Dai Bing
	Estonia . . . . .	Mr. Lipand
	India . . . . .	Mr. Kakanur
	Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Flynn
	Kenya . . . . .	Mr. Ndung'u
	Mexico . . . . .	Mr. Ochoa Martínez
	Niger . . . . .	Mr. Abarry
	Norway . . . . .	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines . . . . .	Ms. Gonsalves
	Tunisia . . . . .	Mr. Cherif
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Jacobs
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Mills
	Viet Nam . . . . .	Mrs. Tra Phuong Nguyen

## Agenda

### The situation in the Central African Republic

Letter dated 25 June 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution 2536 (2020) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/569)

Letter dated 15 June 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/573)

---

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

### The situation in the Central African Republic

**Letter dated 25 June 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution 2536 (2020) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/569)**

**Letter dated 15 June 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2021/573)**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2021/686, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/569, which contains the text of a letter dated 25 June 2021 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution 2536 (2020) addressed to the President of the Security Council, and document S/2021/573, which contains the text of a letter dated 15 June 2021 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

#### *In favour:*

Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

#### *Against:*

None

#### *Abstaining:*

China

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution received 14 votes in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2588 (2021).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

**Mr. Dai Bing** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Since December 2020, general elections have been successfully held in the Central African Republic, while the security situation in the country continues to improve. Against that backdrop, there appears to be a growing disconnect between Security Council sanctions and the evolving situation on the ground. When the Council imposed the arms embargo and other sanctions on the Central African Republic, the intention was to help the country restore national stability and normal social order. In reality, however, the arms embargo has increasingly become an obstacle hampering the efforts of the Government of the Central African Republic to strengthen its security capabilities. The lifting of the arms embargo concerns the sovereignty and security of the Central African Republic. It is not only the aspiration of the people of the Central African Republic, but a common desire of the countries of the region.

China takes note of the efforts made by the penholder to strive for the unanimous adoption of resolution 2588 (2021). However, the text failed to fully respect the wish of the Government of the Central African Republic for the lifting of the embargo. Moreover, China's constructive input was not taken on board. China therefore had to abstain in the voting on the resolution. We would like to reiterate that the Security Council should fully lift the sanctions against the Central African Republic at an early date, in the light of the changes in the situation.

**Mr. Mills** (United States of America): The United States welcomes the extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic and the renewal of the arms embargo, the travel ban and the assets freeze measures for a further 12 months. Those measures remain critical to promoting peace and security in the Central African Republic.

There is no military solution to the crisis in the Central African Republic. Durable peace and stability

require a commitment to good governance, national dialogue, justice and accountability, peacebuilding and a rebuilding of State institutions. The authorities of the Central African Republic must focus on credible security sector reform and ensure that the relaxation of the arms embargo that is provided in resolution 2588 (2021) does not endanger personnel of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), United Nations staff, humanitarian workers or Central African civilians. Put simply, weapons brought into the Central African Republic must not be turned on United Nations peacekeepers or staff, or used to rob, murder or sexually assault civilians.

Such violations must stop. The Government of the Central African Republic must continue to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel on the ground. We call on all Security Council Member States to respect international humanitarian rights law and humanitarian law in general in the Central African Republic.

We also call on the authorities of the Central African Republic to cooperate fully with MINUSCA and ensure that United Nations peacekeepers are fully empowered to carry out their mandate. A key component of that mandate is the protection of civilians against any and all actors who threaten them. We condemn any harassment of MINUSCA personnel and call on all parties to cooperate with MINUSCA's investigation into recent violence.

The United States remains committed to promoting peace and security in the Central African Republic, which is why we voted in favour of this resolution.

**Ms. Jacobs** (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking France, as penholder, for its sterling efforts to achieve this outcome. The United Kingdom supports resolution 2588 (2021), which renews the targeted sanctions and the arms embargo for a further 12 months.

We would once again like to underline that the objective of the arms embargo is to prevent armed groups that continue to perpetrate violence in the Central African Republic from accessing weaponry. However, our support for the resolution does not detract from our continued belief that a technical renewal would have been the appropriate course of action at this time. It is disappointing that one or two Security Council members insisted on the inclusion of the exemptions on mortars.

The accurate use of mortars requires significant levels of training and equipment. We urge the Government of the Central African Republic and its partners to ensure that training is in place in order to avoid increased risks to civilians and to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law.

Those risks are not hypothetical. Reports continue of atrocities against civilians in the Central African Republic, including reports that reached us even as negotiations were ongoing on this resolution. We remain deeply troubled by allegations that such atrocities are being committed not only by armed groups but by members of the national armed forces, and indeed by private military contractors.

The United Kingdom supports the Government of the Central African Republic as it pursues security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process. We welcome the progress that has been made so far towards delivering on the benchmarks the Council set in April 2019. However, those benchmarks for the lifting of the arms embargo have not yet been met. Until they are met, further proliferation of arms — both within the Central African Republic and the wider region — risks potentially disastrous consequences for civilians. We therefore urge the Government of the Central African Republic to accelerate its efforts to meet the benchmarks and to take full responsibility for ensuring effective storage and management of weapons and ammunition. Such progress is vital to improving security for the people of the Central African Republic, combating the risks of arms proliferation and helping to ensure a pathway to peace and reconciliation.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): Norway voted in favour of resolution 2588 (2021) because we believe it is crucial to preserve the sanctions regime concerning the Central African Republic. However, we are not in favour of easing the arms embargo at this point in time. We listened carefully to the requests of the authorities of the Central African Republic and acknowledged the support for that request by countries in the region. However, we believe that it would be untimely to lift the arms embargo.

As set out by the Secretary-General in his letter on 15 June (S/2021/573), the authorities of the Central African Republic have made insufficient progress on the benchmarks established by the Security Council to assess the relevance of the arms embargo. In

addition, as recognized in today's resolution, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, has so far approved all exemption requests submitted by the authorities of the Central African Republic under the framework of the arms embargo. We remain deeply concerned about multiple recent reports about ongoing human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by all parties in the Central African Republic, armed groups, as well as the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic and their instructors. The most recent incident, close to Bossangoa, on 21 July, is just one illustration of that.

We also reiterate our strong condemnation of the ongoing status-of-forces violations against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. We call on all parties to protect civilians and ensure humanitarian access. We urge the authorities of the Central African Republic to investigate all incidents and hold accountable those who are responsible. Only an inclusive political dialogue among all parties, with the continued support of the region and the international community, can resolve the current crisis.

In conclusion, allow me to warmly thank you, Mr. President, and your team, as penholder, for all your efforts, which resulted in today's adoption.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation supported the adoption of resolution 2588 (2021), on the extension of the sanctions regime against the Central African Republic. We note that the Security Council responded to the legitimate request of the authorities of the Central African Republic to further ease sanctions. The simplified procedure stipulated in the resolution just adopted for the supply of 60-millimetre and 82-millimetre mortars for the needs of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic is another step in providing support to Central Africans.

At the same time, we would like to recall that the authorities in Bangui, supported by the countries of the region, call for the complete lifting of the arms embargo, and they have every reason to do. The arms embargo, imposed in the initial stages of the conflict, now complicates efforts to rearm the security forces of the Central African Republic, which bear the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety of citizens.

However, armed groups continue to replenish their weapons stockpiles through smuggling.

We encourage Bangui to continue working to achieve the benchmarks of the arms embargo review so that, in a year, the Security Council will have every reason to lift it.

For our part, we would like to assure the Council that Russia will continue to assist the Central African Republic, both in its national reconciliation process and in the strengthening and training of its security forces in order to stabilize the situation in the country.

**Mr. Ndung'u** (Kenya): On 29 January and 23 May this year, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) held two mini-summits in Luanda. The aim of those summits was to address the political and security crisis in the Central African Republic. The summits instructed the President of Angola and the President of the Republic of the Congo, in their capacity as the Chairs of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), respectively, to initiate contact with the Security Council to present their regional the point of view on the resolution of the conflict in the Central African Republic conflict.

Subsequently, the Council granted audience to the President of Angola, who participated in person in discussions on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic on 23 June (see S/PV.8802). The representative of the Congo read out a message on behalf of the President of the Congo. The overriding message of the ICGLR and ECCAS on the Central African Republic was for the Security Council to lift the arms embargo to enable the Government of the Central African Republic to acquire suitable weapons for its security forces to effectively counter armed groups.

For its part, the Ministry of Defence of the Central African Republic, through a letter to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), concerning the Central African Republic, this month indicated its intention to have the arms embargo lifted. It also sought to acquire and operate 60-millimetre and 82-millimetre mortars. The letter detailed weapons in the possession of the armed groups, including 60-millimetre mortars and as high as 120 millimetres.

Kenya appreciates the compromise by the penholder and the members of the Security Council. We view resolution 2588 (2021) as an improvement on the preceding one in re-equipping the security forces of the Central African Republic to ensure the effective discharge of their duties. Kenya reaffirms its intention to continue supporting the voice of the Central African Republic, the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and the Economic Community of Central African States and ensuring that it is heard by the Security Council. We call on the Central African Republic to redouble its efforts to achieve the benchmarks in order to further strengthen the case for an expeditious lifting of the arms embargo.

**The President:** (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

As this is the last scheduled meeting of the Council for the month of July, I would like to express the sincere appreciation of the delegation of France to the members of the Council and to the secretariat of the Council for all the support they have given to us.

As we end our presidency, I know I speak on behalf of the Council in wishing the delegation of India good luck in the month of August.

*The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.*