

News bulletin

27 October - 3 November 2008

Highlights

- Outcome of the second meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the global peace accord in Libreville
- France provides debt relief of € 38 million
- Launch of the Project to strengthen the rule of law on 29 October in Bangui
- United Nations Day commemorated in Ndélé

Background and security

Monitoring Committee meeting in Libreville

The second meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the global peace accord was held in Libreville on 24 October. In its final communiqué, the Committee announced its decision to ask President Bongo of Gabon to appraise the reservations of the *Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy* (APRD) concerning the amnesty law, considered unacceptable by the APRD.

The Committee adopted the principle of a three-phased disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for the rebel fighters. A task force was set up to propose the modalities of the implementation of the process.

France provides debt relief of € 38 million

France relieved CAR of FCFA 25 billion, the equivalent of € 38 million, of debt in order to allow the country to continue to meet its requirements under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and ultimately to benefit from more debt relief, according to the French Ministry of Cooperation.

Since 2006, CAR has adhered to a programme of the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF) and the World Bank in order to enter the HIPC initiative, successfully reaching the decision point in late 2007. A three year plan based on this programme allowed the country to obtain the re-engagement, in June 2006, of both the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

Once complete, the HIPC initiative will allow the country to benefit from debt relief worth more than

FCFA 300 billion, and the cancellation of multilateral debt of about FCFA 50 billion. Completion point may be reached as soon as 2009.

Mission of the Peace-building Commission

The Peace-building Commission is conducting a mission to CAR from 30 October until 6 November. The delegation is led by Ambassador Jan Grauls, the Permanent Representative of Belgium with the United Nations and Chair of the country-specific configuration of the Commission for CAR.

The objective of the mission is to follow up on the previous mission of July to obtain further information on the priorities, in terms of planned activities, to support the recovery of the country.

The delegation, consisting of 10 members, will work in close collaboration with the Ministry of Planning, Economy and International Cooperation, and will have working sessions with other key ministries.

For more information: tourea@un.org

Current events

Food aid for the people in the north-west

On 28 October, the French NGO *Première Urgence* signed a grant agreement with the French Embassy for the amount of 91 million FCFA. The funds will help *Première Urgence* to provide food assistance to 1,650 families, or 8,250 people, while they are working on road repairs, rehabilitation of lowlands for market gardening, and the construction of areas for the drying of produce along the Ngaoundaye-Paoua road.

In the beginning of 2008, *Première Urgence* had already benefitted from a grant from France, through its Food Aid Programme, to improve access to food for vulnerable people in the north-west as a contribution to the revival of the economic sector in the area. With the grant the NGO had purchased more than 170 tons of food from local economic operators, which was channeled to 6,300 households, or 31,500 people.

For more information: pu.cdm.rca@gmail.com

Strengthening the rule of law

The Project to strengthen the rule of law (PRED) was officially launched on 29 October in Bangui. The project aims to support the justice and security institutions, particularly the judicial and prison systems and the national police. PRED, which is supported by the *United Nations Development*

Programme (UNDP), should create the necessary conditions for economic and human development through the restoration of security and peace.

Given the needs for humanitarian assistance and protection for the civilian population, especially in the interior of the country, it was decided to adopt the approach of early recovery based on the principles of community participation and local ownership.

Many activities will be conducted in the interior of the country, especially in conflict areas where UNDP recorded achievements in the context of the project in support of judicial security for development, the judicial system and human rights (PRASEJ) in the towns of Bozoum, Bossangoa, Sibut and Kaga Bando.

The main project beneficiaries are the justice and security institutions, especially the Ministry of Justice, the magistracy, the Ministry of Interior, civil society working in the field of human rights and access to justice, communities and vulnerable populations, particularly women victims of sexual violence and displaced populations.

For more information: mireille.widmer@undp.org

Coordination

UN Day commemorated in Ndélé

This year, the commemoration of World Food Day in CAR was postponed until 25 October. The ceremony was held in Ndélé, in the north-east. The deferral was an opportunity to also celebrate the United Nations Day in Ndélé on 24 October. It was the first time that the ceremony was held outside the capital.

Dr. Zakaria Maïga, the *World Health Organization* (WHO) Representative and acting Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, chaired the ceremony which helped to inform people about the role of the United Nations in the country. The *United Nations High Commission for Refugees* (UNHCR), the *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* (OCHA), WHO, the *World Food Programme* (WFP), UNDP, the *United Nations Population Fund* (UNFPA) and the *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF) attracted hundreds of people by organizing exhibition stands and competitive games.

"The celebration of 24 October is an important day not only for us ... but also for you, because this organization is also yours. In the Central African

Republic, the day of 24 October has become a traditional encounter between Central Africans and the United Nations system. This year's celebration of United Nations Day has a special character because ... we opened a sub-office in Ndélé just a few months ago so that we could be closer to the people for whom we work," said Dr Maïga during his speech.



High school students responding to questions during a game

By choosing the theme "Together for Peace and Progress in the Central African Republic" this year, the acting Coordinator confirmed that the United Nations in CAR will work in synergy and partnership with the authorities, the private sector and civil society, both to improve efficiency and to increase the impact of their actions.

Contact us: **UN OCHA Bangui, CAR**
 Nancy Snauwaert | snauwaert@un.org | +236 75 54 22 78
 Gisèle Willybiro | willybiro@un.org | +236 75 54 90 31