

News bulletin

25 May – 1 June 2009

Highlights

- New rebel group in the north east
- New UN Special Representative
- CAR-Chad-Cameroon humanitarian coordination

Background and Security

MLCJ split to form MNSP

At a May 23 general meeting at Am Dafok in the north-east, some members of *Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricains pour la Justice* (MLCJ) decided to disengage from the group and create a new movement, the *Mouvement National du Salut de la Patrie* (MNSP).

According to a press release, Hassan Ousman, the former spokesman for the MLCJ, was invited to assume the presidency of the movement and he accepted. The MLCJ is involved in the peace process and this split may have an impact on its next stages for example the *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration* (DDR) programme.

Insecurity in Vakaga in the north east

Vakaga prefecture still has security problems. On 28 May, the office of an international NGO at Ouandja was attacked by armed men, the latest in a series of attacks since April of this year. These incidents have forced NGOs to suspend their activities on the ground.

The NGOs, with the support of the interim Humanitarian Coordinator, have appealed for help from Victor Angelo, the Special Representative of UN Secretary General in Chad and head of MINURCAT, in order to raise awareness about the rise in numbers of attacks in this zone which is under the MINURCAT mandate.

In response, Victor Angelo made a visit to NGOs in Bangui in order to discuss measures to be taken by MINURCAT to improve security conditions for humanitarian missions.

In Birao, the deployment of a new contingent of Togolese MINURCAT troops began on 28 May to replace the French contingent who finished their mission and left the country on 1 June.

News

Recycling of by-products from fish farming

On 25 May 2009, at the initiative of Echelle/APDRA (Association for fish farming and rural development in Africa), a field visit and discussion about fish farms fertilization took place in Bangui's Saint Paul neighborhood. This meeting is part of a two-year pilot project to revive Central African fisheries which has been implemented since November 2007 by a consortium of NGOs: Solidarités, APDRA, AFVP, Echelle, and Caritas-Centrafrrique.

The fisheries technical support team made up of experts from APDRA, Echelle and AFVP convened economic actors, fish farmers and the head of a private trucking company contracted by MOCAF brewery for the visit. In the next few weeks contracts supplying local fish farmers with spent grain (a by-product of beer production) are expected to be finalized. Spent grain is one of the best fertilizers, it efficiently increase both the quality and quantity of fish production.

The negotiation between 32 fish farmers (6 of them women) from 6 areas of Bangui, a businessman, and a representative of the Ministry of Water and Forests demonstrates a successful private-public partnership and a community-based development initiative in an early recovery context.

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Coordination

Joint mission to Bamingui Bangoran

OCHA facilitated a United Nations inter-agency mission (UNDSS, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR and WFP) from 26 to 28 May to Bamingui Bangoran prefecture in the north-east.

The objectives of this mission were:

- humanitarian and security assessment
- meet with UN teams (UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR) in charge of the CAR refugee camp at Daha in Chad
- make an assessment of the logistics supply to the Daha camp from CAR
- meet Ndele WFP partners to assess the progress of food distribution on the Ngarba road.

Distribution made at Ngarba by the NGO *Solidarités* in partnership with WFP is reaching 4,115 beneficiaries who have been displaced. This distribution started on 29 May with 24.67 tons of food.

The mission recommended implementing the "work for food" program for the rehabilitation of some sections of the Ndele Ngarba road which are in poor condition.

A recommendation was also made to send 25 tonnes of emergency grain for distribution in the three other most populous villages - Ngarba, Akourssoulbak and Boulkinia.

Support for assistance and non food items for people living in the bush as well as support for schools in the zones where the displaced population are returning was also proposed.

Following a meeting with the United Nations Chad country team, it is now known that there are 6,940 households - 19,000 refugees - living in 4 camps in Chad - Daha, Massambagne, Batiméra and Koi. It was also recommended to pre-position stock of 1,200 tons of food at Daha (transported through CAR) because by July the Daha refugee camps will be inaccessible from N'Djamena due to flooding.

CAR SRSG Nominated

On Tuesday 26 May, the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon told the Security Council of his intention to appoint Sahle-Work Zewde as Special Representative of UN Secretary General (SRSG) in the Central African Republic.

An Ethiopian national, she is currently Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Ms. Zewde has over 20 years experience as an Ambassador. She was Executive Director of African Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. She was Ethiopian ambassador to France, to Djibouti, Permanent Representative to UNESCO and accredited to Tunisia and Morocco.

Ms. Zewde replaces former SRSG François Fall as BINUCA replaces BONUCA in the near future.

Meeting for CAR-Chad-Cameroon representatives

A tripartite meeting was held on 28 May in Yaounde between representatives of the United Nations from the Central African Republic, Chad and Cameroon.

The meeting was co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator in Cameroon, the interim Special Representative of the Secretary General in CAR and the Special Representative of the Secretary General in Chad. Also in attendance were over 33 representatives of UN agencies. It allowed them to discuss initiatives and actions to be taken to improve humanitarian and development coordination in the region.

The meeting aims to strengthen the networking needed for emergency preparedness to make response more consistent and predictable.

Participants also focused on the management of cross-border movements of people and related protection issues. They agreed on the need of the United Nations to strengthen partnership with regional institutions such as the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

Joint mission to Ouham

Between 19 and 22 May, the UN conducted a joint mission (WFP, WHO, UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA) on the Kabo-Batangafo-Moyenne Sido road and at the Béhili1 Moissala junction road (south of Kabo) in the Ouham prefecture.

The purpose of this mission was to conduct an assessment of the humanitarian needs of populations affected by clashes between regular and unconventional armed forces, by attacks from armed herders and by bandits (zaraguinas).

The fact finding mission reports that some of the population which had returned to their homes on the Kabo-Moyenne Sido road have now deserted their villages (8 of 11 villages from Kabo up till Mbo village) fearing for their lives, following clashes between the *Central African Armed Forces (FACA)* and the *Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain (FDPC)*.

According to estimates, more than 4,900 people have been displaced in the bush while 1,783 have taken shelter in the town of Kabo.

On the Moissala Béhili1 junction road, 3,400 persons have returned to their villages and are trying to pick up the pieces of their lives while at the Kabo-Moissala junction road, some 5,500 people have returned to their villages.

In addition to ongoing humanitarian work, emergency food distribution is to be made at Kabo, on the Kabo-Sido road and on the Kabo-Béhili1 Moissala junction road in order to meet rising food needs. Other priorities include school canteens, training for nutrition programmes for children, pregnant women and old people as well as non-food items and drinking water distribution points.

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