

Forum: United Nations Security Council

Issue: Discussing the instability caused by armed conflicts in the Central African Republic emphasizing the massive amounts of displacements

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Introduction

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country right in the middle of Africa. It borders Cameroon to the west, the Republic of the Congo to the southwest, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the south, South Sudan to the east, Sudan to the northeast, and finally Chad to the north. Despite its richness of natural resources, the country is considered one of the poorest and most unstable in the world, having been home to constant instability and violent conflict for decades. Large parts of the country are controlled by armed groups, which has led to a continuous humanitarian crisis. As of 2025, the number of people who have been forcibly displaced due to conflict is over 1.4 million, some of which having fled within CAR itself (Internally Displaced Persons), and others to other neighboring countries (Refugees). There are several complex factors contributing to the ongoing instability in the Central African Republic. Some of which are as follows: political power struggles, historical grievances (long-lived feelings of resentment or injustice, e.g. colonialism, wars or invasions, ethnic or religious oppression, etc.), unreliable governance, and competition over resources. These conflicts have caused widespread displacement, resulting in one of the most underreported and underfunded displacement crises all across the globe. The situation remains fragile and concerning despite the attempts to restore the stability in the region by the United Nations, neighboring countries, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and regional organizations.

Definition of Key Terms

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

IDPs are individuals or groups who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, persecution, or disasters but remain within their country's borders, as defined by the UN Refugee Agency. Unlike refugees, IDPs do not cross international borders and therefore are not covered by the same legal protections as refugees are under international law. An example for (an) Internally Displaced Person(s) would be a family having to flee their home to somewhere else within the boundaries of their country due to relentless bombardments in their previous area of residence.

Refugees

Refugees are individuals who have been forced to flee their home country due to persecution, conflict, or violence, as defined by the UN Refugee Agency. What differentiates them from IDPs is that they cross international borders and are protected under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Refugees from the Central African Republic have fled to bordering countries like Chad, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Séléka

The Sango word "séléka" (one of the two national languages of CAR, along with French) means "coalition" or "alliance". It is the name of the coalition that overthrew the CAR government in 2013, which mostly consists of Muslim rebel groups. After initiating a wave of violence all across the country, the coalition was formally disbanded. However, many ex- Séléka factions continue to operate and control territory.

Anti-Balaka

Anti-Balaka is an alliance of militia groups in CAR, mostly consisting of Christians and animists. They have committed retaliatory violence against Muslim communities, contributing to a cycle of ethnic and religious violence. It is reported that some members have forcibly converted Muslims to Christianity. This conflict between Séléka and Anti-Balaka has put the country in a position on the verge of genocide.

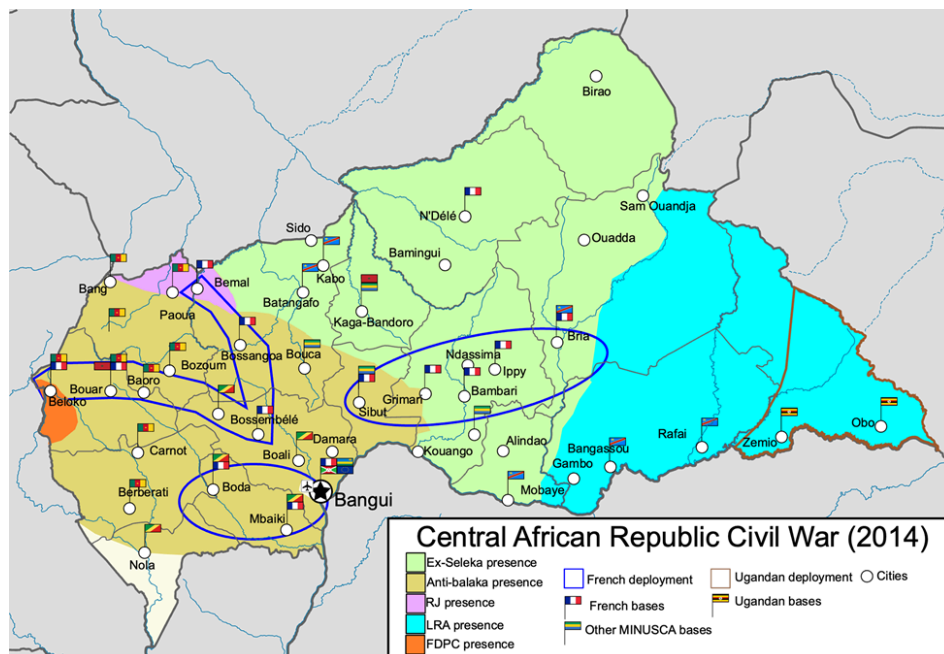


Figure 1: Map of control in the Central African Republic as of 2014

MINUSCA

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was established in 2014 to protect civilians, support peace processes, and strengthen the government's authority.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is the condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary. In CAR, conflict-driven displacement and competition over resources often results in widespread hunger and malnutrition.

Background Information

The instability in the Central African Republic (CAR) is one of the most protracted and devastating humanitarian crises in Africa; it's driven by armed conflict, ethnic and religious tensions, and weak governance. One of the most significant consequences of this instability is the massive internal and external displacement of civilians. The most recent political crisis arose when a group of predominantly Muslim rebel movements banded together in a loose alliance known as Séléka to oppose the regime of then President François Bozizé, who came to power in a coup in 2003. This militia committed mass atrocities when they marched the capital, Bangui, in March 2013. The crimes they committed did not stop after they came into power. The Christian self-defense sources known as anti-balaka, opposed Séléka and began targeting Muslim civilians. Religious tensions had not previously been a major issue in CAR, but the repeated cycles of revenge attacks created deeper divisions within the population, which lead to more violence regarding identity. With the height of the 2013-14 conflict an unofficial division in the Central African Republic (CAR) occurred into Muslim and Christian segments. In mid-May 2014 554,800 people were internally displaced and 359,834 had to fight neighboring countries. The vast majority of displaced people were Muslim. A 2014 United Nations (UN) Commission of Inquiry report concluded that abuses by the anti-balaka amounted to ethnic cleansing of the country's Muslim community.

Séléka Coup and Its Aftermath

The Séléka was a coalition of rebel groups such as; Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP), Cerebral Palsy Society of Kenya (CPSK), Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) in the Central African Republic (CAR). Séléka means "alliance" in Sango, which is one of the national languages of the Central African Republic. Séléka emerged on 15th September 2012 then formed in December 2012, initially led by Michel Djotodia with a main goal of opposing President François Bozizé, accusing him of failing to honor previous peace agreements. Their stated aim was to seek justice and development, but their actions quickly became controversial. In March 2013 Séléka forces captured the capital, Bangui, and overthrew Bozizé. Michel Djotodia declared himself president, becoming the first Muslim leader of the Central African Republic (CAR). Shortly after the Séléka regime was marked by widespread violence, humanitarian violations, and looting especially against Christian communities. This triggered brutal backlash from Christian militias known as anti-balaka, leading to conflict. The anti-balaka response led to massacres, particularly targeting Muslims. By early 2014, nearly a quarter of the population had been displaced. Subsequently, under international pressure Djotodia resigned in January 2014. Even after official dissolution, ex-Séléka factions continued to operate and fight with the goal of control in certain parts of the country.

The Anti-Balaka

The Anti-Balaka are a loosely organized coalition of Christian and animist militias in the Central African Republic (CAR) best known for their violent role in the conflict following the 2013 Séléka group. Many members were former soldiers, village defense groups, or civilians who armed themselves in reaction to Séléka violence. Their main goal was to resist and retaliate against the Séléka, which proposed a threat to their Christian communities. Their actions did not stop with only defense but the anti-Balaka militias attacked Séléka forces and began launching

retaliatory assaults on Muslim communities that they associated with the Séléka. These attacks often included; mass killings, burning homes and mosques, massacres in muslim towns which led to mass displacement in Muslim communities. The first attack of the anti-Balaka occurred on the 5th of December 2013, where they launched a coordinated attack in Bangui, aiming to overthrow the Séléka regime. The fighting erupted over the city killing over a 1,000 people in just a few days. This violence triggered international intervention, leading to the deployment of French and African Union peacekeepers and it also marked the beginning of open sectarian warfare. Another massive attack was the Bossemsptélé where anti-Balaka fighters killed at least 100 Muslim civilians in the town of Bossemsptélé. Reportedly some victims were executed in a church where they sought refuge, shocking international watchers and was cited in both United Nations (UN) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports.

Human Rights Violations

The Séléka regime which served from March 2013 to early 2014 was responsible for many widespread and severe violations of human rights. These abuses were conducted before, during, and after the regime. The legacy of the Séléka regime still continues today. Some of the many extrajudicial killings were conducted publicly and the victims were carried out in front of their families to instill fear. Civilians were arrested arbitrarily, held without charges, and subjected torture. Victims of the regime were beaten, burned and were forced to go through other inhumane treatments in detention centers. Sexual violence such as rape was also used very systematically during the regime including gang rape and sexual slavery, the victims were as young as 12 year old girls. Séléka fighters looted homes, schools, hospitals and religious buildings. "Séléka fighters are killing civilians and burning villages to the ground while some villagers are dying in the bush for lack of assistance." said Daniel Bekele, Ethiopian human rights expert and activist (*Human Rights Watch, 2013*). With Séléka's leadership claiming political goals, many attacks took a sectarian tone

where Christians were disproportionately targeted for violence and displacement. Which sparked a rise in anti-balaka militias, further worsening the conflict. Recruitment of child soldiers also became a huge issue, with children as young as 12 years old being recruited for the Séléka forces. These children served as fighters, messengers or porters and were exposed violence and exploitation.

Displacement

Displacement refers to the forced movement of people from their homes, often due to conflict, violence or natural disasters. It results in people becoming Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or refugees if they cross an international border.

Displacement during the Séléka regime was caused by; widespread violence when Séléka forces carried out indiscriminate killings and destroyed towns and villages, targeted attacks where Christians were primarily targeted promoting mass fighting, sectarian fear where even Muslims fled the country when anti-Séléka retaliation began, and urban chaos when the capital, Bangui, saw thousands flee with the fighting between Séléka and anti-Balaka escalated. The scale of displacement was close to 1 million people due to the internal violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), including 700,000 people in the capital, Bangui. Over 300,000 people fled to neighbouring countries such as; Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon. Many villages and towns were emptied completely after being burned down. As of 2025, thousands of people still remain displaced, many IDPs live in makeshift camps, abandoned buildings or with host families. Security concerns especially from armed groups prevent the safe return of these IDPs.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Central African Republic (CAR)

The government struggles to assert control outside the capital Bangui and depends heavily on international peacekeepers and foreign support. Despite multiple peace

deals, armed groups remain active. The national army (FACA) is undertrained and under-equipped.

Chad

Chad shares a long border with CAR and hosts over 120,000 Central African refugees, most of whom have fled repeated waves of violence since 2013. These refugees are concentrated in southern Chad, where poor infrastructure and limited resources make humanitarian support difficult. Chad has also been accused of interference in CAR's internal affairs, especially during past crises involving cross-border armed movements. While the country plays a regional role in peace efforts, its own internal instability and economic challenges limit its capacity to fully address the needs of displaced populations.

Sudan

Sudan's significance lies not in formal state support but in its geographic, ethnic, and military connections that made it a crucial source of fighters, arms, and operational space for the rebel coalition. While Sudan's government did not officially back Séléka, the country played an indirect but influential role in the rise of operations and movement. The porous CAR–Sudan border, especially near Darfur, allowed for easy movement of arms and fighters. Many Séléka fighters were allegedly armed and trained in Sudanese territory including light weapons, technical vehicles, and military supplies. Rebel groups which were based in northeastern CAR often retreated into Sudan when under threat. Sudan was also used as a staging ground or safe zone, particularly before the 2013 Séléka offensive.

Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Cameroon and DRC were also not direct supporters of the Séléka regime which occurred in 2013, but both countries played significant roles both during and after. Their importance relied on border dynamics, refugee movements, smuggling routes, and regional diplomacy. As the violence escalated in 2013 tens of thousands of CAR

civilians fled to Cameroon and DRC. Cameroon hosted large refugee camps such as Gado-Badzere, run with support from UNHCR and NGOs. Whilst some Séléka fighters and other CAR rebels operated near or crossed the northeastern border between CAR and DRC for smuggling, tactical retreats, and resource extraction. As a member of Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Cameroon supported peace talks and mediation efforts, while the DRC participated in regional peace efforts, including the 2013 N'Djamena negotiations and Bangui Forum (2015). As of 2025, over 300,000 refugees still remain in Cameroon.

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)

MINUSCA is the primary international peacekeeping force in CAR today. MINUSCA was established by the UN Security Council 2149 on April 10th, 2014 in response to severe violence and human rights abuses committed by Séléka and anti-balaka forces. MINUSCA's mandate is broad and multidimensional, combining military, political, human rights, and development efforts. Protection of civilians was MINUSCA's core mission since its deployment. MINUSCA has had active military patrols in high-risk areas and also they have deployed peacekeepers to IDP camps especially in Bangui and the northwest. MINUSCA has also established early warning mechanisms to respond to attacks. They have rebuilt schools, clinics and roads, alongside addressing land disputes linked to displacement.

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

ECCAS is a regional bloc of 11 countries, including CAR, Chad, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC and is responsible for regional peace and security. ECCAS played a critical regional diplomatic and peacekeeping role during the rise and collapse of the Séléka regime in the Central African Republic (CAR). Although ECCAS did not support Séléka, it became the primary mediator during the 2012-2014 crisis and worked to stabilize the region. When Séléka began its advance in late

2012, ECCAS stepped in to mediate between President François Bozizé and the rebels. Peace talks were held in Libreville, Gabon in January 2013, under ECCAS' leadership. During the peace talks an agreement was made brokered by ECCAS between Bozizé's government and Séléka, which included; a ceasefire, creation of a unity government, and commitment to early elections. However, the agreement failed as Bozizé reneged on promises, and Séléka resumed its offensive. Despite the conflict ECCAS still remains as a regional peace actor, supporting refugee coordination with host countries and advocating for economic and institutional reforms in CAR.

Timeline of Events

2003	François Bozizé came into power in the Central African Republic (CAR).
September 15 2012	Séléka emerged
December 2012	Séléka was formed
March 2013	Séléka forces overthrew François Bozizé and captured the capital, Bangui. Michel Djotodia, the leader of Séléka, declared himself president.
December 5 2013	The first attack of anti-balaka.
January 2014	François Bozizé resigned from his position under international pressure.
April 10 2014	MINUSCA was formed under United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Relevant UN Resolutions and Other Documents

- [Resolution 2127 \(2013\)](#)

Authorized the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) and French forces to protect civilians and stabilize the country.

- [Resolution 2134 \(2014\)](#)

Extended the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in CAR (BINUCA) and imposed a comprehensive sanctions regime, including a travel ban and asset freeze.

- [Resolution 2149 \(2014\)](#)

Established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) to assist in restoring state authority and protecting civilians.

- [Security Council lifts arms embargo on Central African Republic forces](#)

Discusses the lifting of the arms embargo on CAR government forces and ongoing measures against armed groups.

- [Security Council deplores ongoing violence, attacks on civilians in Central African Republic](#)

Covers the Security Council's concerns over continued violence and its impact on civilians.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Efforts to resolve the Séléka conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) have involved a series of regional, continental, and international interventions, beginning before the Séléka coalition took power in 2013 and continuing through its collapse and transformation into armed factions. The first attempt was the Liberville Agreement brokered by ECCAS, supported by Gabon, Chad, and the African Union (AU). The agreement proposed a ceasefire, formation of a unity government, early

elections, and that Bozizé would remain in power temporarily. The agreement failed because Bozizé violated terms, delaying implementation and failing to share power. The second attempt was the N'Djamena Summits which was organized by ECCAS, hosted by Chadian President Idriss Déby. The goals of the summit included pressuring Michel Djotodia into controlling his forces, restoring law and order, and to stop human rights abuses. The summit did succeed with Djotodia resigning in January of 2014. However, the long-term consequences of the regime were ineluctable.

Possible Solutions

Addressing the long-term consequences of the Séléka regime in the Central African Republic (CAR) requires a comprehensive and sustained strategy focused on security, justice, governance, economic recovery, and reconciliation. The Séléka's rise, rule (2013–2014), and fragmentation into armed factions caused mass displacement, ethnic-religious violence, state collapse, and armed group proliferation which are problems that still persist today. A solution could be training and equipping national forces with external support from the European Union (EU), African Union (AU), and MINUSCA with prioritization to inclusive recruitment from all ethnic and regional groups, including marginalized Muslim communities historically linked to Séléka. Dismantling or absorbing ex-Séléka and Anti-balaka elements into state forces only after vetting and DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration). This solution could help end reliance on foreign mercenaries or private security actors, which undermines sovereignty and civilian trust. Another solution could be to address impunity for war crimes and rebuilding public trust. This solution would need the strengthening of the Special Criminal Court (SCC) to investigate and prosecute Séléka-era atrocities and crimes by all armed actors, providing victim compensation programs, truth commissions, and local justice mechanisms, ensuring equal prosecution of both Séléka and Anti-balaka crimes to avoid perceptions of bias.

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