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country of origin research and information

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Preface

Country of Origin Information (COI) is required within Refugee Status Determination (RSD) to provide objective evidence on conditions in refugee producing countries to support decision making. Quality information about human rights, legal provisions, politics, culture, society, religion and healthcare in countries of origin is essential in establishing whether or not a person's fear of persecution is well founded.

CORI Country Reports are designed to aid decision making within RSD. They are not intended to be general reports on human rights conditions. They serve a specific purpose, collating legally relevant information on conditions in countries of origin, pertinent to the assessment of claims for asylum. Categories of COI included within this report are based on the most common issues arising from asylum applications made by nationals from the Central African Republic. This report covers events up to 20 October 2013.

COI is a specific discipline distinct from academic, journalistic or policy writing, with its own conventions and protocols of professional standards as outlined in international guidance such as The Common EU Guidelines on Processing Country of Origin Information, 2008 and UNHCR, Country of Origin Information: Towards Enhanced International Cooperation, 2004.

CORI provides information impartially and objectively, the inclusion of source material in this report does not equate to CORI agreeing with its content or reflect CORI's position on conditions in a country. It is acknowledged that all sources have a bias, it is for decision makers to place a weight on sources, assessing relevance to each individual application.

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CORI is an independent centre providing specialist research resources to support Refugee Status Determination.

CORI works internationally with all parties to RSD, including governments, legal representatives and NGOs, producing commissioned research reports and providing knowledge management services. CORI works to improve standards of COI production through capacity building and training.

Country of Origin Research and Information (CORI)

www.coricentre.net

info@coricentre.net

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A. Security Situation/Developments (since January 2011)

In December 2012, the Séléka, a coalition of rebel groups,¹ launched an offensive in the north of the Central African Republic. The groups claimed that President François Bozizé had failed to uphold the terms of the peace agreements signed in 2007, 2008 and 2011. On 11 January 2013, peace talks between the Séléka and the Bozizé Government, held in Libreville under the auspices of the *Economic Community of Central African States* (ECCAS), resulted in the signing of the Libreville Agreements, which provided for transitional and power-sharing measures.²

In March 2013, the Séléka, claiming that the Government had not fulfilled its obligations under the Libreville Agreements, resumed fighting and, on 24 March 2013, seized the capital, Bangui, forcing President Bozizé to flee the country. The leader of the Séléka, Michel Djotodia – who had been appointed in February 2013 by President Bozizé as first Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Defence of the Government of National Unity established following the Libreville Agreements of January 2013 – proclaimed himself President, suspended the Constitution, dissolved the Government of National Unity, the National Assembly and the Constitutional Court, and commenced to rule by decree. Mr. Djotodia reappointed Nicolas Tiangaye as interim Prime Minister of the transitional arrangement put in place.³

On 13 April, the National Transitional Council was established, electing Mr. Djotodia, the only candidate, as Head of the transition. The National Transitional Council was expanded on 12 May to comprise 135 members, and a new 34-member Government of National Unity was formed on 13 June 2013. Mr. Djotodia became Minister for Defence in the interim Government, while remaining President of the National Transitional Council. Mr. Djotodia was officially sworn in as Head of State of the Transition on 18 August 2013.⁴

In May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported that the National Transitional Council (“Conseil national de transition”) which is composed of Seleka members, former opponents to Francois Bozize, former pro-government members, former rebels as well as members of civil society. The sole candidate to the position of Head of State, Michel Djotodia was elected with the approval of the National Transitional Council and his mandate is due to last 18 months. *Le Monde* reported that the National Transitional Council has the power to legislate as well as to draw up a new constitution.⁵

¹ Comprising the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR), the Convention patriotique du salut du Kodro (CPSK), the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP – Fondamentale) and the Union des forces républicaines (UFR).

² UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para 8 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

³ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para 9 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

⁴ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para 10 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

⁵ *Le Monde*, Michel Djotodia élu pour la forme président de Centrafrique, 14 April 2013, <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/04/14/michel-djotodia-elu-pour-la-forme-president-de->

In May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported that Michel Djotodia founded the Seleka movement (meaning “alliance” in national language Sango) in June 2012. The Seleka offensive was launched in December 2012. It resulted in unstoppable looting that “destroyed part of the economic sector of the country which was already one of the poorest in the world.” *Le Monde* reported that the Central African Republic is predominantly Christian, and many fear domination by Muslim Seleka members coming from the north of the country. Michel Djotodia became the first Muslim President.⁶

In June 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that President of the Transition Michel Djotodia gained official recognition when he was invited to participate in the next Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) Summit in Libreville.⁷

1. Brief overview (general information) of CAR’s Government Forces including armed forces, police, security forces, intelligence services (including structure and areas of activity)

1.1 Government forces after 24 March 2013

On 3 May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that security and defence forces had been disbanded,

“The Seleka offensive dismantled the policing architecture. National security and defence forces (gendarmerie, police and national army) have disintegrated. Despite repeated calls for former security and defence forces to resume their duties, to date, only a small number of the police and national armed forces officers — and none from the High Command — have resumed their functions.”⁸

However, on 6 May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that former government soldiers who had fled after the Seleka coup were now joining the new army set up by Head of State Michel Djotodia. General Jean-Pierre Dolle-Waya, former senior officer under Francois Bozize’s regime had recently been appointed Chief of Staff by Michel

[centrafrique_3159496_3212.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/04/14/michel-djotodia-elu-pour-la-forme-president-de-centrafrique_3159496_3212.html), accessed 16 June 2013

⁶ *Le Monde*, Michel Djotodia élu pour la forme président de Centrafrique, 14 April 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/04/14/michel-djotodia-elu-pour-la-forme-president-de-centrafrique_3159496_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

⁷ *Afrik.com*, Centrafrique : Michel Djotodia invité au sommet de la CEMAC, 11 June 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-michel-djotodia-invite-au-sommet-de-la-cemac>, accessed 12 June 2013

⁸ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

Djotodia. Former senior officers Lieutenant-Colonels Guy Arnold and Thomas Tchimangoa had also been nominated to high command positions.⁹

In April 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that 400 Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace ("Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix"- CPJP) soldiers headed by General Abdoulaye Hissen had arrived in Bangui to be incorporated into the new regular army. Abdoulaye Hissen has been appointed as Minister for Youth, Arts and Culture. Led by Lieutenant Mahamat Salley, the 400 soldiers joined Camp Kassai. The nomination of Jean-Pierre Dollo-Waya as Chief of Staff previously started a reform process of the Central African Armed Forces ("Forces armées centrafricaines" - FACA).¹⁰

In October 2013 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that the Extraordinary Committee for the Defence of Democratic Achievements (Comité extraordinaire de défense des acquis démocratiques- CEDAD) was a new police force led by Nouradine Adam, Minister of Public Security and a former Seleka general.¹¹

1.2 Government forces before 24 March 2013 (Francois Bozize's forces)

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that the police and military share responsibility for internal security,

"The Ministry of Immigration, Emigration, and Public Security, through the director general of police, has oversight over the activities of the national police, including the OCB. The Ministry of Defense oversees military forces, including the presidential guard, national gendarmerie, and the SRI. Police and military forces share responsibility for internal security."¹²

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* stated that the police were ineffective,

"Police were ineffective; they lacked financial resources, and their salaries were often in arrears. Citizen distrust of the police at times led to mob violence against persons suspected of theft and other offenses."¹³

In November 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* together with French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported clashes within the tripartite forces composed of soldiers from the CAR, Chad and Sudan in nearby Birao

⁹ Le Monde, Un général appelle l'armée en exil à revenir en Centrafrique, 6 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/06/un-general-appelle-l-armee-en-exil-a-revenir-en-centrafrique_3171286_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

¹⁰ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : 400 hommes d'Abdoulaye Hissen arrivent à Bangui, 13 June 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-400-hommes-d-abdoulaye-hissen-arrivent-a-bangui>, accessed 16 June 2013

¹¹ Reporters Without Borders, Seleka disbanded but journalists still threatened, 18 October 2013, http://en.rsf.org/rca-seleka-disbanded-but-journalists-15-10-2013_45341.html, accessed 20 October 2013

¹² United States State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102#sthash.bBXuB7fZ.dpuf>, accessed 30 August 2013

¹³ United States State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102#sthash.bBXuB7fZ.dpuf>, accessed 30 August 2013

(north of the CAR) resulting in the death of 4 CAR soldiers and massive displacement of the population.¹⁴

1.2.1 Effectiveness of law enforcement in the face of rebel coups

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council on the situation in the Central African Republic and stated that since the launch of the Seleka attacks in December 2012 there has been a breakdown of law and order,

“The country is plunging into a state of general anarchy marked by a complete breakdown of law and order.

[...] Since Seleka seized Bangui, it has taken control of the entire territory politically and militarily, yet it is unable to restore law and order across the country. Fractures have deepened within the coalition, hampering the Seleka leadership’s control over its own elements.”¹⁵

In May 2013 international NGO *Amnesty International* reported that the new government has not enforced the rule of law and that the government and military leadership showed little sign of bringing perpetrators to justice,

“[...] not only do the new authorities appear to lack the will or the capacity to prevent or stop the violations, it is Seleka soldiers who seem to be the main perpetrators.

[...] Several civil society organizations in the CAR have told Amnesty International that they had hoped that with a new government in place, the CAR authorities would have been better able to enforce the rule of law and protect human rights. Information received by Amnesty International in recent days suggests human rights violations continue unabated. The government and the military leadership of Seleka show scant signs of ending the violations or bringing the perpetrators to justice.

[...] there is reportedly no evidence that the new government has plans to bring its own soldiers who carried out human rights violations to justice.”¹⁶

1.3 Forced recruitment

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that,

¹⁴ Jeune Afrique, Quatre militaires centrafricains tués dans une fusillade au sein de la force tripartite, 16 November 2012, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20121116103409/soudan-tchad-centrafricain-biraquat-militaires-centrafricains-tues-dans-une-fusillade-au-sein-de-la-force-tripartite.html>, accessed 17 June 2013

¹⁵ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

¹⁶ Amnesty International, Synthèse sur la situation des droits humains en République centrafricaine, 14 May 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/info/AFR19/001/2013/fr>, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/asset/AFR19/001/2013/fr/eb0b98bd-6a3f-4433-b3a5-b807bdd9c3b8/afr190012013en.html>

“Government forces have [...] allegedly recruited and used children, and have committed other grave violations against children, including sexual violence.”¹⁷

[See also [Section B. 4 Women and Children, 4.2.2. The recruitment and use of children in rebel armies](#)]

1.4 Treatment of military deserters

After 24 March 2013

In May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that Michel Djotodia made a statement claiming that “there would be no witch-hunt against those who fled” from former government forces; he called for former military members to join the new army.¹⁸

Before 24 March 2013 (under Francois Bozize’s regime)

In April 2013 French weekly news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that political prisoners under Francois Bozize’s regime were submitted to “torture, summary executions, unbearable detention conditions” in Bossembele military camp. Members of the army and civilians who were considered to be dangerous were held without trial in the camp located 175 km north of Bangui. Seleka Colonel Ali Garba, former member of CAR government forces who spent 3 months in Bossembele camp before being liberated in 2010, stated that he witnessed the summary execution of several members of the army,

“It was Bozize’s slaughterhouse. They would come in, take a soldier and kill him with a bullet. Two days would not go by without a new execution.”¹⁹

Le Nouvel Observateur reported that according to Colonel Ali Garba the soldiers who were killed were mainly those who withdrew when the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (“Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix”- CPJP) forces took over Birao (north) in 2010.²⁰

[See [Section C, Other Human Rights Issues, for further information on detention conditions in Bossembele military camp](#)]

¹⁷ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

¹⁸ *Le Monde*, Un général appelle l’armée en exil à revenir en Centrafrique, 6 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/06/un-general-appelle-l-armee-en-exil-a-revenir-en-centrafrique_3171286_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

¹⁹ *Le Nouvel Observateur*, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombele-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

²⁰ *Le Nouvel Observateur*, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombele-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

2. Brief overview (general information) on paramilitary forces and pro-government (Bozize) militias (brief history, purpose, activity, areas of activity, and human rights abuses committed, including forced recruitment)

2.1 Lord's Resistance Army

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that as of May 2013,

"there were approximately 500 total combatants and dependents within the LRA, operating primarily in Central African Republic (CAR) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo). Of these 500 people, approximately 250 are combatants, including up to 200 Ugandans and 50 low-ranking fighters abducted primarily from ethnic Zande communities in CAR, Congo, and South Sudan"²¹

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that Ugandan operations against the LRA has lead to the most senior LRA commanders retreating to eastern CAR,

"Recent reports from former combatants and from Ugandan intelligence analysts suggest that there are between ten and 15 separate operational groups today, mostly based in the eastern part of CAR A typical LRA group consists of between eight and 20 armed fighters, all men and mostly Ugandan, with between five and ten women and children."²²

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that the LRA operate in four of the CAR's 16 prefectures,

"Many LRA groups are currently based in CAR, operating in a vast area that encompasses four of the country's sixteen prefectures: Haut Mbomou, Mbomou, Haut Kotto, and Vakaga. The LRA first entered CAR through Haut Mbomou in 2008, but have since been pushed west and north by Ugandan forces, which are concentrated in the Haut Mbomou towns of Obo and Djemah.

In recent years, many LRA groups have operated in the sparsely populated area north of the intersection of the Chinko and Vovodo rivers, in Mbomou and Haut Kotto prefectures. One such group that has operated in this area includes senior commanders Leonard "Lubwa" Bwone, Francis Abuchingu,

²¹ The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

²² The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

and Alphonse Lamola. The group previously included OnenChan AciroKop "Angola Unita," but he may no longer be traveling with them. The veteran fighters appear to have had a falling out with Kony in mid-2011 and were placed under the supervision of younger escorts in their twenties, who both protect them and prevent their defection. As of May 2013, at least one other group of about 28 people operated in the vicinity of Agoumar in Mbomou prefecture."²³

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that the LRA has conducted abduction and looting raids in the Bangassou-Fode-Bakouma-Nzako area and that the Ugandan military and their US advisors rarely had the capacity to operate in these areas, allowing the LRA to act with impunity,

"To the west of the Chinko-Vovodo confluence, the LRA has periodically conducted massive abduction and looting raids on towns along the Bangassou-Fode-Bakouma-Nzako axis, including the looting of a uranium mining facility in Bakouma in June 2012. Ugandan troops and US advisers have rarely had the capacity to operate that far west, allowing LRA groups to attack communities with impunity."²⁴

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that the LRA had carried out attacks in Haut Mbomou prefecture,

"Though LRA groups have operated more cautiously in Haut Mbomou prefecture, where Ugandan troops and US advisers are concentrated, they still commit perimeters of Obo. As of March 2013, two satellite groups reporting to Odhiambo seemed to be operating north of Obo."²⁵

In July 2013 US based NGO *The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative* reported that Kony operated in northern CAR, a region in which over 50 people were abducted in June 2013,

"Senior LRA commanders, including Kony, also operate in the ungoverned areas of Vakaga and northern Haut Kotto prefectures. Media reports claimed that LRA raiders were responsible for a series of brutal attacks in this region in June 2013 in which 18 civilians were reportedly killed and over 50 others abducted, but the perpetrator of those incidents remains unidentified."²⁶

In June 2013 *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that the Lord's Resistance Army ("L'Armée de résistance du seigneur"- LRA) attacked 2 villages in Bria (centre of the CAR) resulting in the death of 12 civilians, injuries and looting. *Le Monde* reported that this region is regularly targeted by LRA attacks and that President Michel Djotodia declared war against the LRA. LRA leader Joseph Kony is wanted by the International Criminal Court and by

²³ The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

²⁴ The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

²⁵ The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

²⁶ The Resolve, LRA Crisis initiative, Loosening Kony's Grip, Effective defection strategies for today's LRA, July 2013, <http://invisiblechildrenblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/loosening-konys-grip-july-2013-final.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2013

the USA. *Le Monde* reported that according to the U.N., the LRA has killed over 100,000 people in Central Africa over the past 25 years. Since 2005 the LRA has moved into the Central African Republic, the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. LRA members commit looting, rape, mutilation, murders, forced recruitment of children later used as soldiers and sex slaves.²⁷

In May 2012 French weekly news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* reported that LRA leader Caesar Acellam had been captured in the CAR by the Ugandan army. Caesar Acellam was the highest ranking LRA leader captured so far. He was number 4 of the organisation after leaders Joseph Kony, Okot Odhiambo and Dominic Ongwen, all of whom are wanted by the ICC. The ICC issued an arrest warrant against a 4th LRA leader, Vincent Otti, former second-in-command and Vice President of the LRA, who is however believed to be dead. When he was captured Caesar Acellam was found together with a Central African teenage girl, a Ugandan woman and a baby. He was transferred to Nzara in South Sudan.²⁸

2.2. Unidentified rebel group (in Obo)

In May 2013 French international news radio *RFI* reported that the town of Obo (south east) had been attacked by an unidentified rebel group. According to a local source, the rebels might have been members of an armed group from South Sudan, and not LRA members.²⁹

In June 2013 French international news radio *RFI* reported that the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) together with Ugandan and US forces captured 43 rebels after they attacked the town of Obo on 24 May 2013. However 7 of these prisoners died during the first night of their detention. According to the Prefect of Obo, their death was caused by their wounds after civilians attempted to lynch them. Their bodies had been exhumed under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross. *RFI* reported that they seemed not to have been executed.³⁰

2.3 Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace

In December 2012 US security organisation *GlobalSecurity.com* reported that the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) is a well organised rebel group based in northern CAR which was reformed in 2009,

"The CPJP - Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace - is a rebel group based in northeastern CAR and comprised primarily of Rounga tribesmen. The CPJP is remarkably well organized, equipped, and run relative to other ragtag

²⁷ *Le Monde*, L'Armée de résistance du seigneur tue en Centrafrique, 16 June 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/06/16/l-armee-de-resistance-du-seigneur-tue-en-centrafrique_3430919_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

²⁸ *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Centrafrique: le numéro 4 de la LRA capturé par l'armée ougandaise, 13 May 2012, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20120513.AFP6069/centrafrique-le-numero-4-de-la-lra-capture-par-l-armee-ougandaise.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

²⁹ *RFI*, Centrafrique: la ville d'Obo attaquée, 25 May 2013, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20130525-centrafrique-ville-obo-attaquee-soudan-sud>, accessed 12 June 2013

³⁰ *RFI*, RCA : l'enquête se poursuit sur l'attaque de la ville d'Obo, 4 June 2013, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20130604-rca-enquete-poursuit-attaque-ville-obo>, accessed 12 June 2013

rebel groups in the CAR. The CPJP's stronghold of Akoursoubak was the scene of a formal ceremony where promotions were bestowed upon a select group of officers. There were recognizable military police manning check points, distinctly separate from the regular militiamen.

By 2009 a new armed group (CPJP - Patriotic Convention for Justice and Peace) was active in the north. The CPJP was originally said to be made up of UFDR members of the Rounga tribe who broke with the Goula dominated UFDR after being expelled from the diamond fields near Sam Ouandja. Former Minister of Defense Charles Massi declared himself to be the spokesman of the group, but as his home is in the extreme west of the country and he had no previous engagement in the Ndele region, his role and importance are not clear. In any case, while Massi was languishing in a Chadian jail as of early June 2009, the CPJP remained very active. Political commentators from the Birao area say that this group is not connected in any way with the Kara/Gouala conflict in the Birao area."³¹

In March 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) forces led by General Nouredine Adam came in from Chad and attacked the town of Sido, targeting the sub-prefecture, CAR military forces, customs and police stations. Civilians fled as the rebels captured the town.³²

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that the CPJP was formed to protect ethnic Runga from UFDR attacks and went on to control mining territory in Bria and Haute-Kotto province. In August 2012 the CPJP signed a peace agreement with the government,

“The CPJP is a rebel group created in 2008 based near Ndélé. It was created to protect ethnic Runga from UFDR attacks of non-Goula tribes. The CPJP soon sought control of diamond mines in the northeast. By 2010 it controlled mining territory around Bria in Haute-Kotto province. In late 2010 it attacked Birao with the help of Chadian rebels and briefly held the town. The CPJP signed a ceasefire with the government of CAR on June 12, 2011, and a peace agreement on August 25, 2012. Two CPJP commanders, Nouredine Adam and Mohamed Moussa Dhaffane, opposed the peace deal. Dhaffane left the CPJP in 2012 to start his own rebel group, the CPSK.”³³

2.4 Chadian forces: Front Patriotique pour le Redressement (FPR) of Baba Ladde

References were found for both “Front populaire pour le redressement,” and “Front Patriotique pour le Redressement.”

³¹ Global Security, CPJP - Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace, 30 December 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/cpjp.htm>, accessed 20 October 2013

³² *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : une faction de la coalition rebelle attaque une localité du Nord, 1 March 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/03/01/centrafrique-une-faction-de-la-coalition-rebelle-attaque-une-localite-du-nord_1841485_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

³³ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUploadWInsert_0.pdf, accessed 20 February 2014

In June 2012 *AFP* reported that the Popular Front for Recovery (FPR) was a Chadian rebel group led by 'General' Baba Ladde and had been active in CAR since 2008.³⁴

In March 2012 UK daily newspaper *The Guardian* reported that a joint CAR and Chad military operation was launched in January 2012 to oust the FPR from northern CAR,

"The military operation, which was launched on 23 January, is aimed at capturing FPR rebel leader "General" Abdel Kader, alias Baba Laddé, and is concentrated in the areas of Ouandago and Gondava, 80km and 45km from the main town of Kaga-Bandoro, respectively.

Following a joint attack on FPR positions on 24 January, an estimated 16,000 people were displaced, according to a bulletin from CAR's Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (HDPT). "This number is likely to change since some regions still remain inaccessible," it added."³⁵

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported members of the Baba-Ladde's Chad rebellion had been committing widespread human rights violations between Bossembele and Boali for more than 2 weeks. *RJDH* reported that a curfew had been imposed on the sub-prefecture of Boali.³⁶

In June 2011 Central African Blog *Centrafrique-presse.com* released CAR's national media *Le Confident* reporting that although Baba Ladde signed a peace agreement with Chadian authorities, members of the Front populaire pour le redressement (FPR) who were settled in Takara and Gondavo since 2008 did not necessarily follow the orders. Those men had built houses, married wives and transformed their area of influence into some kind of "bunker". From their base, they would lead punitive expeditions up to the Mbres and to the Bamingui-Bangoran to steal cattle or to ransom farmers.³⁷

In June 2011 *Le Confident* reported violent clashes between FPR members and members of the Armee Populaire pour la Restauration de la Democratie (APRD) in Nana-Gribizi that resulted in terrorising the population.³⁸

³⁴ Agence France-Presse, Central Africa gunmen attack French uranium plant: army, 25 June 2012, <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/central-africa-gunmen-attack-french-uranium-plant-army>, accessed 20 June 2013

³⁵ The Guardian, Military offensive in Central African Republic adds to humanitarian crisis, 7 March 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2012/mar/07/central-african-republic-humanitarian-crisis>, accessed 20 June 2013

³⁶ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Boali : La présence des hommes armés fait des déplacés internes, 16 August 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/08/16/boali-la-presence-des-hommes-armes-fait-des-deplaces-internes>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

³⁷ Centrafrique-presse.com, Lu pour vous dans le Confident: Le FPR du Tchadien Baba Laddé, 22 June 2011, <http://centrafrique-presse.over-blog.com/article-lu-pour-vous-dans-le-confident-le-fpr-du-tchadien-baba-lade-seme-la-terreur-a-kaga-bandoro-77522159.html>, accessed 10 February 2014

³⁸ Centrafrique-presse.com, Lu pour vous dans le Confident: Le FPR du Tchadien Baba Laddé, 22 June 2011, <http://centrafrique-presse.over-blog.com/article-lu-pour-vous-dans-le-confident-le-fpr-du-tchadien-baba-lade-seme-la-terreur-a-kaga-bandoro-77522159.html>, accessed 10 February 2014

In August 2011 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* reported that at least 65 members of the Front populaire pour le redressement (FPR) had been occupying the region of Pladama Ouaka located between the towns of Bamabari (centre east) and Kouango (south east). They were looting and racketing. Baba Ladde was located in Kaga Bandoro (north) where he was about to meet CAR's authorities.³⁹

According to *Jeune Afrique*, members of the FPR who had been chased by the Chadian army had withdrawn to Kaga Bandoro in 2008 “where they were often accused of banditry and stealing on the roads”.⁴⁰

In December 2011 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* reported that 41- year old self appointed General Baba Ladde was a former non commissioned officer of the Chadian army. He founded the Front populaire pour le redressement (FPR) with the purpose of overthrowing Chadian President Idriss Deby. Baba Ladde called to form a great alliance with the Tuareg people, Aqmi, Ogaden pro-independence movement, the Sahraoui of the Polisario and the Peul people. He aimed at federating all the Peul people from Mauritania to the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁴¹

According to *Jeune Afrique*, his militiamen were equipped with Kalashnikovs, bows and poisoned arrows.⁴²

According to *Jeune Afrique*, although his militia constituted a threat for Chad and the CAR, Baba Ladde had been staying in the North of Central Africa racketing and looting so far.⁴³

In September 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* reported that the North of the CAR had been destabilised for more than 3 years by the FPR. However, CAR and Chad's armed forces led a joined action at the beginning of 2012 that weakened the FPR. Baba Ladde later announced he would surrender to the authorities.⁴⁴

In September 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* reported that Baba Ladde was back in N'Djamena and had declared that he was not pursuing any political claim.⁴⁵

³⁹ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique: le médiateur national dans un village occupé par des rebelles, 6 August 2011, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20110806153050/rebellion-fpr-francois-bozize-centrafriquecentrafrique-le-mediateur-national-dans-un-village-occupe-par-des-rebelles.html>, accessed 10 February 2014

⁴⁰ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique: le médiateur national dans un village occupé par des rebelles, 6 August 2011, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20110806153050/rebellion-fpr-francois-bozize-centrafriquecentrafrique-le-mediateur-national-dans-un-village-occupe-par-des-rebelles.html>, accessed 10 February 2014

⁴¹ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique : Laddé l'homme qui veut 'libérer' les Peuls, 23 December 2011, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAJA2658p008-009.xml0/actualite-afriquecentrafrique-ladde-l-homme-qui-veut-liberer-les-peuls.html>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁴² *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique : Laddé l'homme qui veut 'libérer' les Peuls, 23 December 2011, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAJA2658p008-009.xml0/actualite-afriquecentrafrique-ladde-l-homme-qui-veut-liberer-les-peuls.html>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁴³ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique : Laddé l'homme qui veut 'libérer' les Peuls, 23 December 2011, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAJA2658p008-009.xml0/actualite-afriquecentrafrique-ladde-l-homme-qui-veut-liberer-les-peuls.html>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁴⁴ *Jeune Afrique*, Tchad : retour « sans condition » du chef rebelle Baba Laddé à N'Djamena, 6 September 2012, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20120906094900/onu-tchad-fpr-n-djamenatchad-retour-sans-condition-du-chef-rebelle-baba-ladde-a-n-djamena.html>, accessed 10 February 2014

⁴⁵ *Jeune Afrique*, Baba Laddé : grosse fatigue, 14 September 2012, http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/JA2696p013_01.xml0/tchad-fpr-idriss-deby-itno-gendarmeriebaba-ladde-grosse-fatigue.html, accessed 10 February 2014

In May 2013 a United Nations report of the Secretary General to the Security Council stated that the FPR was dismantled in 2012,

“In addition, the United Nations estimates that up to 35 children associated with FPR were repatriated to Chad following the dismantling of that armed group in September 2012.”⁴⁶

In October 2012 *IRIN* reported that Baba Ladde surrendered on 3 September 2012,

“Preparations for the repatriation of 3,000 followers of a Chadian former rebel leader have started in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR). If successful, the month-long operation will be an important step towards the return of peace and security in northern and north-central CAR.

Abdel Kader Baba-Laddé, the leader of the Popular Front for Recovery (Front Populaire pour le Redressement, or FPR), surrendered on 3 September and returned two days later to Chad to make peace with the government there.”⁴⁷

2.5 Patriotic Convention for the Salvation of Kodro (Convention Patriotique du salut du Kodro, CPSK)

In December 2012 French international news radio *RFI* reported that the Patriotic Convention for the Salvation of Kodro (“Convention patriotique du salut du *kodro*”- CPSK) was officially launched after a Constituent Assembly that took place on 20-21 June 2012. “Kodro” means “country” in Sango language. It was founded by Mohamed-Moussa Dhaffane, a former member of the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJC) and a former Official of the CAR Red Cross. He proclaimed himself Armed Forces General and joined the Seleka coalition, fighting together with former officers of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) grouped in the Alliance for the Rebirth and Rebuilding (“Alliance pour la renaissance et la refondation”- A2R).⁴⁸

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that General Dhaffane was arrested by the Seleka on 30 June 2013 and was held at a military camp in Bangui by Seleka forces,

“The CPSK was founded in June 2012 by General Mohamed Moussa Dhaffane, formally of the CPJP. Dhaffane was arrested in Chad in 2009, but was released in December 2012. He promptly re-joined the CPSK and the Seleka. He was appointed the minister of water and forests but was accused

⁴⁶ United Nations, Report of the Secretary General to the Security Council (A/67/845-S/2013/245), 15 May 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/countries/central-african-republic/>, accessed 1 March 2014

⁴⁷ IRIN, Central Africa: Boost for peace as rebel group disbands, 9 October 2012, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/96496/central-african-republic-boost-for-peace-as-rebel-group-disbands>, accessed 1 March 2014

⁴⁸ RFI, Centrafrique : pour qui roule la Seleka ?, 29 December 2012, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20121229-centrafrique-roule-seleka-bozize-faca-cpjp>, accessed 6 February 2014

by the transitional government of recruiting mercenaries and buying weapons and was fired. He was arrested by the Seleka on June 30. At the time of writing he was detained at the Camp de Roux, a military camp occupied by the Seleka in Bangui.”⁴⁹

2.6 Alliance for the Rebirth and Rebuilding (Alliance pour la Renaissance et la Refondation, A2R)

In December 2012 French international news radio *RFI* reported that the Alliance for the Rebirth and Rebuilding (“Alliance pour la renaissance et la refondation”) was made up of former military officers of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) who had joined the Seleka coalition at the end of December 2012 under the name A2R.⁵⁰

In December 2012 Chadian media *Al Wihda* released the Alliance for the Rebirth and Rebuilding's first official statement. The Alliance described itself as “an alternative political movement.” The A2R joined the Seleka on 27 December 2012 and called for Francois Bozize to withdraw from power. In the statement, the Alliance requested that all military officers of the FACA join them. Salvador Edjezkane signed the statement as A2R coordinator.⁵¹

In March 2013 Chadian media *Tchadonline* published an A2R official statement turning the Alliance into a political movement called Movement for Rebirth and Rebuilding (“Mouvement pour la Renaissance et la Refondation”- M2R) on 19 March 2013. According to the statement, the M2R is made up of former military officers as well as civilian political figures.⁵²

In its 2013 report on CAR international NGO *Human Rights Watch* reported on the genesis of the A2R originally grouped in opposition to the Gbayas in the army,

“The A2R was a loose underground movement within the former FACA. It opposed the prominent position of ethnic Gbaya in the army. It was formed in October 2012 by former army officers and sought connections with the Seleka, from which it has distanced itself since the start of hostilities.”⁵³

2.7 Mouvement d'Auto-Défense des Gbayas de l'Église du Christianisme Céleste(MADGECC)

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUploadWInsert_0.pdf, accessed 20 February 2014

⁵⁰ RFI, Centrafrique : pour qui roule la Seleka ?, 29 December 2012, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20121229-centrafrique-roule-seleka-bozize-faca-cpjp>, accessed 6 February 2014

⁵¹ Al Wihda, Centrafrique : l'A2R rejoint à son tour la coalition du Séléka (officiel), 29 December 2012, http://www.alwihdainfo.com/Centrafrique-L-A2R-rejoint-a-son-tour-la-coalition-du-Seleka-officiel_a6173.html, accessed 7 February 2014

⁵² Tchadonline, RCA : Communiqué N° 001 du 19 mars 2013 du mouvement M2R qui remplace l'A2R, 20 March 2013, <http://tchadonline.com/index.php/rca-communique-n-001-du-19-mars-2013-du-mouvement-m2r-qui-remplace-la2r/>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁵³ Human Rights Watch, « Je peux encore sentir l'odeur des morts », La crise oubliée des droits humains en République centrafricaine, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913fr_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 7 February 2014
In English, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUploadWInsert.pdf

In April 2013 Central African News Agency *La nouvelle Centrafrique* published the first official press release by the Mouvement d'Auto-Defense des Gbayas de l'Eglise du Christianisme Céleste (MADGECC) signed by Celestin Ferran. The MADGECC was founded by practising Gbayas,

“We, the Gbayas who practise the religion of the Église du Christianisme Céleste founded by Samuel Bilehou Joseph Oshoffa, we are a specific target for the crimes of the rebels who seized power because we have the same ethnic origin and we share the same religious faith than President Bozize. We are not hunted for political reasons, we are hunted because of our ethnic origin and our religion.”⁵⁴

In May 2013 News Agency on Central Africa *Africa Info* reported that the MADGECC joined four other groups, namely the FLISM (“Front pour la Libération et l'Indépendance de la Sangha-Mbaéré”), the UBBB (“Union des Bandas de Bambari et Bria”), the PZO (“Patriotes Zandes d'Obo”) and the ROY (“Rassemblement Oubanguien Yakoma”) to form an alliance in order to fight against the Seleka. It was called Anti-Jihadist African Alliance (“Alliance Africaine Anti-Jihadiste” - AAAJ).⁵⁵

In January 2013 French daily newspaper *Libération* reported that Francois Bozize founded the Central African branch of the Eglise du christianisme céleste- Nouvelle Jérusalem.⁵⁶

2.8 Anti Balakas (meaning anti-machette in Sango language) Self Defence Group operating in Bouar, North West of CAR

In October 2013 international Francophone TV *TV5 Monde* reported that Anti Balakas were self defense militias created to in response to abuses by former Seleka rebels,

“Since President Bozize was overthrown on 24 March, the State collapsed in the Central African Republic. Self-defence militias of peasants called “anti-balakas” were created in reaction to the abuses committed by former Seleka rebels. In order to try and restore peace, the U.N. Secretary-General called that 560 soldiers be sent. However in the meantime, violence continues.”⁵⁷

⁵⁴La nouvelle Centrafrique, Création du MADGECC, **Mouvement d'Auto-Défense des Gbayas de l'Église du Christianisme Céleste – communiqué de presse n°01, 29 April 2013**, <http://www.lanouvellecentrafrique.info/creation-du-madgecc/>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁵⁵Africa Info, Centrafrique : Les forces du FDPC d'Abdoulaye Miskine appelés à rejoindre l'Alliance, 6 May 2013, <http://africa-info.org/economie/politique/5068-centrafrique-les-forces-du-fdpc-dabdoulaye-miskine-appelles-a-rejoindre-lalliance-.html>, accessed 7 February 2014

⁵⁶Libération, Centrafrique : le Magicien « Boz » ?, 4 January 2013, http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2013/01/04/centrafrique-c-est-qui-le-boz_871795, accessed 7 February 2014

⁵⁷TV5 Monde, Reportages TV5 Monde : la Centrafrique en plein chaos, 31 October 2013, <http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Centrafrique/p-26631-Reportages-TV5MONDE-la-Centrafrique-en-plein-chaos.htm>, accessed 10 February 2014

3. Brief overview (general information) of the Seleka Forces, including armed forces/ security forces (including structure and areas of activity)

In April 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Figaro* stated that the Seleka forces were,

“[...] a coalition of various rebellions, mostly antagonistic ones [...] to which one must add the latest recruits. Those men were necessary to overthrow Bozize; however, they are mainly mercenaries from Sudan or Chad and they have become largely uncontrollable [...]”⁵⁸

In December 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that the Seleka alliance was composed of the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP), the Convention patriotique pour le salut wa kodro (CPSK) headed by Dhaffane Mohamed Moussa and the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR).⁵⁹

In June 2013 French daily newspaper *Libération* stated that the Seleka was “originally made up of heterogeneous groups,” and they “used rape and looting – in particular of churches- while they entered the capital.”⁶⁰

In June 2013 French daily newspaper *Libération* reported that some Seleka rebels from Sudan or Chad were suspected of wanting to Islamise the country. These accusations were denied by Michel Djotodia, the first Muslim Head of State of the CAR. *Libération* reported that soldiers claiming to be members of the Seleka forces recently attacked Bourca causing 7 deaths and many casualties. They also looted and burned down houses. *Libération* also reported that a young farmer had been beaten to death in a village in the north by men who claimed to be part of the Seleka forces.⁶¹

In May 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that a Seleka member claimed on the national radio that he cut the throat of a young civilian after having tortured him in the Renaissance Palace [former Presidential Palace in Bangui⁶²]. The body was left out of the Palace for everyone to witness. *Afrik.com* stated that,

“Not only do the former rebels loot, rape, torture and molest to death Central Africans, but they now publicly proceed to cut the throat of civilians.”⁶³

⁵⁸ Le Figaro, La Centrafrique s'enfoncé dans le chaos, 18 April 2013, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2013/04/18/01003-20130418ARTFIG00670-la-centrafrique-s-enfonce-dans-le-chaos.php>, accessed 13 June 2013

⁵⁹ Jeune Afrique, Centrafrique : le régime de Bozizé ébranlé par les rebelles du Séléka, 19 December 2012, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20121218171228/soudan-tchad-francois-bozize-centrafriquecentrafrique-le-regime-de-bozize-ebanle-par-les-rebelles-du-seleka.html>, accessed 17 June 2013

⁶⁰ Libération, Le feu couve toujours en Centrafrique, 6 June 2013, http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2013/06/06/le-feu-couve-toujours-en-centrafrique_908914, accessed 12 June 2013

⁶¹ Libération, Le feu couve toujours en Centrafrique, 6 June 2013, http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2013/06/06/le-feu-couve-toujours-en-centrafrique_908914, accessed 12 June 2013

⁶² La Nouvelle Centrafrique, Centrafrique : Le palais de la Renaissance vandalisé, 29 March 2013, <http://www.lanouvellecentrafrique.info/centrafrique-le-palais-de-la-renaissance-vandalise>, accessed 17 June 2013

⁶³ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : un jeune homme égorgé par la Séléka, 21 May 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-un-jeune-homme-egorge-par-la-seleka>, accessed 17 June 2013

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that since Seleka forces seized Bangui, tensions have grown within the coalition,

“Fractures have deepened within the coalition, hampering the Seleka leadership’s control over its own elements. Seleka fighters refuse to be cantoned. In addition, there are persistent tensions between different factions of the Seleka coalition, each recruiting more elements, raising the risk of an all-out confrontation among them. Furthermore, some Seleka elements are demanding the immediate payment of allowances that were promised to them prior to the capture of Bangui.”⁶⁴

3.1 Forced recruitment

In June 2013 French daily newspaper *Libération* reported that Michel Djotodia had officially handed about fifty child soldiers to UNICEF, who had previously been enrolled by the Seleka forces.⁶⁵

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that the Seleka forces had recruited children as soldiers, with evidence of children being re-recruited after being liberated by the U.N. from other armed groups,

“In January and February 2013, child protection professionals documented 27 cases of recruitment and use of children by elements of the Seleka alliance, predominantly in the prefectures of Ouham, Ombella-Mpoko and Bamingui-Bangoran.

[...] Since Seleka’s offensive on Bangui, new accounts have been documented of its recruitment of children in the capital. There is also evidence of Seleka’s re-recruitment of children previously separated by the United Nations from different armed groups, including 19 children formerly associated with CPJP.”⁶⁶

[See also [Section B. 4. Women and Children, 4.2.2. The recruitment and use of children in rebel armies](#)]

3.2 Treatment of military deserters

In May 2013 international NGO *Amnesty International* stated that former and demobilized soldiers have been mistreated,

“Many children, some of whom had recently been demobilized have been re-recruited by Seleka.

⁶⁴ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

⁶⁵ *Libération*, Le feu couve toujours en Centrafrique, 6 June 2013, http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2013/06/06/le-feu-couve-toujours-en-centrafrique_908914, accessed 12 June 2013

⁶⁶ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

[...] According to reports, Seleka soldiers have been summarily executing and torturing members of the former government's security forces, sometimes under the pretext of carrying out disarmament."⁶⁷

4. Overview of the current security situation

In August 2013 *IRIN* reported that the countries entire population of 4.6 million were affected by the crisis, with 1.6 million in "dire need of assistance."⁶⁸

In September 2013, the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) reported that the number of internally displaced people is approaching 400,000.⁶⁹ An assessment exercise conducted between February 2013 up to 24 September 2013 covered 13 prefectures out of 16 in the country revealed 394,979 internally displaced persons which represents 8,3% of the total CAR population. *UNHCR* reported that Ouham Prefecture is the most affected region with 170, 823 displaced, including 75,300 in the Bossangoa area.⁷⁰

In October 2013 *IRIN* reported that the crisis in CAR was deepening,

"Hundreds of civilians have been killed in violence since the March coup, thousands have fled their homes, basic services have been adversely affected and senior humanitarian figures have warned of a possible spillover of violence into neighbouring countries."⁷¹

In October 2013 *Amnesty International* reported "unprecedented" levels of human rights abuses in the Central African Republic, stating that the violence of the security forces was now out of control and included gang rapes, torture, executions and the recruitment of thousands of child soldiers.⁷²

In October 2013, UK based newspaper *The Guardian*, reported that tens of thousands of people have fled in a new wave of attacks and ruthless killings by armed groups and government forces in the north-west of the country.⁷³

⁶⁷ Amnesty International, Amnesty International demande au nouveau gouvernement de la République centrafricaine de protéger les civils, 14 May 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/002/2013/en/de7ee1d9-50c4-4514-9569-0a0d9e998d7a/afr190022013fr.html>, accessed 21 July 2013

In English : <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/002/2013/en/b1d927c4-abe7-42a2-a5fd-0ad1f014e023/afr190022013en.pdf>

⁶⁸ IRIN, Central African Republic - a crisis in numbers, 16 August 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98582/central-african-republic-a-crisis-in-numbers>, accessed 20 August 2013

⁶⁹ UNHCR, Fact sheet on the operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the Central African Republic, 30 September 2013
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CAR_Fact_Sheet_30_SEPT_2013_ENG_0.pdf, accessed 05 November 2013

⁷⁰ UNHCR, Fact sheet on the operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the Central African Republic, 30 September 2013
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CAR_Fact_Sheet_30_SEPT_2013_ENG_0.pdf, accessed 05 November 2013

⁷¹ IRIN, Briefing: Terror grips Central African Republic, 17 October 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98955/briefing-terror-grips-central-african-republic>, accessed 20 October 2013

⁷² Amnesty International, Central African Republic: Violence of security forces now out of control, 29 October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/central-african-republic-violence-security-forces-now-out-control-2013-10-29>, accessed 2 November 2013

⁷³ The Guardian, Sheltering from sectarian violence: thousands flee in Central African Republic – in pictures, 28 October 2013
<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2013/oct/28/central-african-republic-flee-sectarian-violence-in-pictures>,

"The Séléka alliance has since been officially disbanded, but its members have continued their campaign of looting, torture and rape, creating a climate of fear and violence. Many people have fled into the bush or gathered in large groups to seek safety."⁷⁴

In October 2013 *The Guardian* reported that the sudden escalation of sectarian violence has heightened the prevailing atmosphere of fear within the displaced communities.⁷⁵ In November 2013, the *BBC* reported on sectarian violence,

"Concern is growing that the Central African Republic is sliding into religious conflict following the overthrow of President Francois Bozize in a rebellion in March."⁷⁶

In October 2013, the French humanitarian NGO, *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) reported "unprecedented" levels of violence,

"In the last month, we have treated more than 60 people in Bossangoa for injuries that are the result of violence – largely gunshot and machete wounds – including women and children... More than 80 per cent of surgeries have been for wounds that are conflict-related. MSF is horrified by what we are seeing, including burnt villages and appalling scenes of murder. Those who are fleeing are in desperate need of assistance, as well as the sense of protection that the presence of aid agencies brings."⁷⁷

In September 2013, the French non-governmental federation for human rights organizations *Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme* (FIDH) described human rights violations by Séléka as "international crimes,"

"In the absence of the army, the police and [a] justice [system], these youths who include children, terrorize an unprotected population. Heavily armed, with their pick-up [trucks] and motor bikes, they kill, kidnap, [and] torture for money or to stifle all protest. They burn entire villages and rape the women. These human rights violations qualify as international crimes."⁷⁸

In September 2013, the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported that there has been a breakdown in law and order,

accessed 4 November 2013

⁷⁴ The Guardian, Sheltering from sectarian violence: thousands flee in Central African Republic – in pictures, 28 October 2013 <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2013/oct/28/central-african-republic-flee-sectarian-violence-in-pictures>, accessed 4 November 2013

⁷⁵ The Guardian, Sheltering from sectarian violence: thousands flee in Central African Republic – in pictures, 28 October 2013 <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2013/oct/28/central-african-republic-flee-sectarian-violence-in-pictures>, accessed 4 November 2013

⁷⁶ BBC, Central African Republic: Religious tinderbox, 04 November 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24802898>, accessed 05 November 2013

⁷⁷ *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) Central African Republic: Fighting reaches unprecedented levels of violence, 16 October 2013

<http://www.msf.org/article/central-african-republic-fighting-reaches-unprecedented-levels-violence>, accessed 5 November 2013

⁷⁸ Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH) Central African Republic: A Country in the Hands of Séléka War Criminals, September 2013 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/rapport_d_enque_te_rca_ld.pdf, accessed 05 November 2013

"Following the Séléka offensive of 10 December 2012, judicial personnel fled their jurisdictions, after which Séléka soldiers reportedly looted and occupied courts, taking the place of judges and prosecutors in a number of prefectures. In Bangui, the mission received reports of attacks against magistrates and lawyers by the Séléka in retaliation for past verdicts and lawsuits."⁷⁹

In September 2013, the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported that as a result of the reported collapse of the judiciary, the administration of justice is ineffective and perpetrators of human rights violations enjoy impunity,

"In most of the cases of gross human rights violations reported to the mission, no investigations or prosecutions have ensued."⁸⁰

4.1 Human rights abuses committed against civilians, including attacks, killings and disappearances by CAR's Government Forces, including allied paramilitary and militias

4.1.1 Seleka Forces

In October 2013 *IRIN* reported Oxford Analytica as stating that following the coup, Seleka "has since become the main perpetrator of violence against civilians."⁸¹

In September 2013 the *International Federation for Human Rights* reported that Seleka forces, comprised of more than 10,000 men, have terrorised the population with abuses including murder, rape, kidnapping, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention,

"Ever since they brought one of their leaders to power following the 24 March 2013 coup, Seleka rebels – more than 10,000 men led by Central African, Chadian, and Sudanese warlords - control the country and terrorize the population in the absence of law enforcement and national justice. After a fact-finding mission in July, in Bangui and in the north of the country, FIDH estimated that more than 400 murders had been committed by members of Seleka since the overthrow of power. The report presents many testimonies of victims and witnesses involving rape, kidnapping, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and detention, racketeering, systematic looting and villages set on fire by these armed men."⁸²

⁷⁹ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para 15 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

⁸⁰ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para 16 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

⁸¹ IRIN, Briefing: Terror grips Central African Republic, 17 October 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98955/briefing-terror-grips-central-african-republic>, accessed 20 October 2013

⁸² International Federation of Human Rights Defenders, Central African Republic: International Community must help the country surmount the current chaos, 24 September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/en/africa/central-african-republic/central-african-republic-the-international-community-must-help-the-13978>, accessed 20 October 2013

In September 2013 *IRIN* reported that Ouham Province in the northwest was one of the areas worst affected by violence and that attacks by Seleka forces had displaced large numbers of villagers,

"the violence in Ouham has pushed at least 170,000 people into the forest or into Bossangoa. In Bossangoa, about 36,000 people are seeking refuge at a church, a provincial administration office, and at a local school."⁸³

In July 2013 *UNHCR* reported that there was an absence of security in CAR and that violence had increased,

"Overall, there remains a serious absence of security, and lawlessness is widespread. Our staff on these missions received reports of arbitrary arrest and illegal detention, torture, extortion, armed robbery, physical violence including sexual violence, rape and attempted rape, abduction, restriction of movement, targeted lootings and attacks on civilians. Villages and houses had been burnt down in some areas by armed groups.

Violence against women, girls and boys had also increased."⁸⁴

In July 2013 *IRIN* reported that in some areas human rights abuses have left villagers fearful of being in town after 3pm, seeking safety in forests or their farms,

"Insecurity in CAR has also disrupted access to basic commodities and exacerbated human rights abuses.

According to OCHA, in the areas of Damara and Sibut, "the population continues to live in their farms or in the forest and come to town only during the day to obtain essential items and return by 3:00pm."⁸⁵

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that Seleka forces had attacked the following villages and roads in 2013 with weaponry including guns and RPG's, during which homes were burned and looted and villagers killed;

- Batangafo-Bouca Road: 10-14 April
- Kaga-Bandoro-Mbres Road: 14-15 April
- Villages on the Bouca-Bossangoa Road: 18 April
- Ouin: 1 May
- Villages on the Bossangoa-Boguila Road: 19 May
- Villages on the Batangafo-Bouca Road: 2 June⁸⁶

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that the Seleka attacked villages in quick succession and that villagers were fearful to return,

⁸³ IRIN, Briefing: Terror grips Central African Republic, 17 October 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98955/briefing-terror-grips-central-african-republic>, accessed 20 October 2013

⁸⁴ UNHCR, Situation in CAR remains unstable, humanitarian access difficult, civilians fear, 5 July 2013, <http://www.unhcr.org/51d6a08e9.html>, accessed 20 October 2013

⁸⁵ IRIN, Spike in disease and food security fears in CAR, 9 July 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98386/spike-in-disease-and-food-security-fears-in-car>, accessed 20 October 2013

⁸⁶ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

"Most villages in rural Central African Republic are situated on roads. As such, Seleka forces and their allies were able to attack numerous villages in quick succession. Villagers told Human Rights Watch that they were sometimes able to flee their homes because they could hear shooting from the next village on the road. However, many villagers had no choice but to stay in the area to continue working their fields. In villages that were not destroyed, Human Rights Watch researchers would enter in their vehicle and see residents fleeing into the bush.

When Human Rights Watch on June 9, 2013, entered the village of Gbade—a village that had been abandoned, but not burned—villagers slowly emerged, carrying machetes and homemade hunting rifles as protection. A resident of Gbade told Human Rights Watch, "Now we only come back for church service....We see nothing here to give us the confidence to come back."⁸⁷

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that that since the December 2012 attacks there have been grave human rights violations by Seleka forces and other armed groups,

"Since the launch of the Seleka attacks in December 2012, the country has been facing a serious security crisis, with widespread and grave violations of human rights, including arbitrary arrests and detention, sexual violence against women and children, torture, rape, targeted killings, recruitment of child soldiers and other abuses, reportedly committed by uncontrolled Seleka elements and unidentified armed groups across the country."⁸⁸

The *U.N. Secretary-General* further reported that there were increasing signs of mounting resistance from the population.⁸⁹

In January 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* stated that while the Seleka forces were taking control over north and north eastern parts of the CAR, several people from those regions disappeared in Bangui. They were accused of colluding with the rebels. According to *Afrik.com*, Francois Bozize and his allied militias are the only ones to know what happened to the prisoners. *Afrik.com* stated that after hostilities broke out on 10 December 2012 a witch-hunt had been launched against the Goula and Rounga ethnic groups (from north and north-east of the CAR) on the grounds that they composed most of the Seleka rebellion. Many had disappeared and were not registered in regular detention centres. According to Mike Steve Yambete, Coordinator of the Coalition of Citizens Actions militia ("Coalition des actions citoyennes"- COAC),

"[...] an important number of rebels are being held at the Investigation and Research Section's office ("Section de recherches et d'investigation"- SRI) in Bangui."⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

⁸⁸ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

⁸⁹ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

4.1.2 Looting and gun violence in Bangui and surrounding suburbs, including the Government response

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that Seleka forces attacked the following areas in Bangui in 2013 with weaponry including guns, axes and RPG's - killing civilians;

- Damala: 27 March
17 people were killed when Seleka took revenge for the killing of one of their soldiers during an earlier Seleka attack.
- Walingba: 12 April
An RPG injured 15 civilians, 13 of whom were children.
- Ngaragba Bridge: 13 April
18 unarmed civilians were killed by indiscriminate shooting and an RPG attack against villagers taking part in a funeral procession.
- Boy-Rabe: 13-14 April
Dozens of unarmed civilians were killed by Seleka forces claiming to be carrying out disarmament operations on 13-14 April. On 14 April an RPG hit Cite Jean XXIII Church, killing 13 people.
- Mpoko River
Nine young men were arbitrarily detained by Seleka and stabbed with knives and axes and hit with guns. Five of the men were summarily executed by the Mpoko River.⁹¹

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that the CAR government refuted reports of the numbers of people killed since the coup,

"Noureddine Adam [Minister of Public Security and Seleka General], the minister of public security, that the numbers killed since the coup have been exaggerated saying, "The total of people killed after the coup is very low. Only 10 people were killed [total], only 1 person was killed in Damala."⁹²

In June 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that Seleka members attacked the Evangelical Church "L'église évangélique des frères de Cité Jean-XXIII" located in the 4th district of Bangui on 14 April. According to the Pastor in charge of the Church, the congregation was shelled; 4 people died and 37 were injured.⁹³

⁹⁰ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : le sort des prisonniers politiques toujours en question, 25 January 2013,

<http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-le-sort-des-prisonniers-politiques-toujours-en-question>, accessed 17 June 2013

⁹¹ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

⁹² Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

⁹³ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : une église ressuscite à une attaque de la Séléka, 10 June 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-une-eglise-ressuscite-a-une-attaque-de-la-seleka>, accessed 16 June 2013

On 10 May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* together with French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that 3 civilians died in Gobongo neighbourhood in Bangui (north of the capital). Violent clashes erupted between civilians and the Seleka forces after a 17-year-old man was killed. *Le Monde* stated that Seleka rebels had been looting and committing abuses against civilians since they took power.⁹⁴

In April 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Figaro* stated that “3 weeks after the Seleka rebels took control over the country, looting and murders were still taking place in Bangui”.⁹⁵ *Le Figaro* reported that the situation remained insecure after Michel Djotodia's appointment Head of State. *Le Figaro* reported that 20 people died in 2 days in the neighbourhood of Boy-Rabe in Bangui after a violent struggle took place between the Seleka forces and reportedly former pro-government (Bozize) supporters. A diplomatic source stated that Bozize gave out guns when leaving the country. The same source further stated that the Seleka rebels commit repeated acts of looting and murders. *Le Figaro* reported that Michel Djotodia did not succeed in having Seleka troops cantoned and announced that 1,000 additional “gendarmes” and policemen would be brought in to enforce law.⁹⁶

On 14 April 2013 French international news radio *RFI* reported clashes between the Seleka armed forces and civilians in the 7th district of Bangui (close to the French Embassy). The clashes originated with the mob reacting to the death of a woman shot by the Seleka forces,

“There are rumblings of discontent in the civilian population against the Seleka rebels who took control over the city and who loot and racket instead providing security.”⁹⁷

According to *RFI*, several deaths and numerous casualties were reported in the area of Ouango close to the French Residency and the Oubangui River. A local source reported “a general climate of fear” amongst civilians due to the presence of Seleka armed forces. *RFI* reported that about 250 people from the CAR were seeking refuge in the north of the Democratic Republic of Congo everyday day.⁹⁸

In April 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported on the clashes that took place on 13-14 April between Seleka forces and civilians in the 7th district of Bangui (close to the Oubangui River) resulting in 20 deaths and many casualties. The new leader Michel Djotodia accused former pro-Bozize soldiers who had been distributed guns and uniforms to have triggered the incident on purpose. According to the Red Cross, 4 people also died in Boy-Rabe neighbourhood and 3 in Gobongo

⁹⁴ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : trois morts dans de nouveaux heurts entre Séléka et civils à Bangui, 10 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/10/centrafrique-trois-morts-dans-de-nouveaux-heurts-entre-seleka-et-civils-a-bangui_3175325_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

⁹⁵ *Le Figaro*, La Centrafrique s'enfoncé dans le chaos, 18 April 2013, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2013/04/18/01003-20130418ARTFIG00670-la-centrafrique-s-enfonce-dans-le-chaos.php>, accessed 13 June 2013

⁹⁶ *Le Figaro*, La Centrafrique s'enfoncé dans le chaos, 18 April 2013, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2013/04/18/01003-20130418ARTFIG00670-la-centrafrique-s-enfonce-dans-le-chaos.php>, accessed 13 June 2013

⁹⁷ *RFI*, Echauffourées à Bangui entre la Seleka et des civils, 14 April 2013, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20130414-republique-centrafricaine-president-michel-Djotodia-echauffourees-bangui-seleka-civils-refugies>, accessed 13 June 2013

⁹⁸ *RFI*, Echauffourées à Bangui entre la Seleka et des civils, 14 April 2013, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20130414-republique-centrafricaine-president-michel-Djotodia-echauffourees-bangui-seleka-civils-refugies>, accessed 13 June 2013

neighbourhood, both located in the 4th district of Bangui (north of the capital). According to the Central African Red Cross, 119 people died (civilians, military soldiers, Seleka members) and 456 were injured since the Seleka took over [on 24 March] and before the incidents on 13 April. *Le Monde* reported that uncontrolled members of the former Seleka rebellion as well as bandits were still looting in a general climate of fear.⁹⁹

On 30 March 2013 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that 78 bodies had been found in the streets of Bangui since the Seleka rebellion took power on 24 March. *Jeune Afrique* reported that looting took place during several days and that the sanitary situation was critical - most particularly in the hospitals - due to lacks of running water, electricity and fuel.¹⁰⁰

On 29 March 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that the Central African Red Cross had collected 78 dead bodies in the streets of Bangui since the Seleka captured the town. The Red Cross reported that over 200 people had been admitted to the hospitals following clashes and that there were shortages of water, electricity and fuel. The rebellion seized power after clashes with South African army forces causing the death of 13 South African soldiers and "limited combats with pro-Bozize soldiers". According to *Le Monde* reporting on 29 March, looting was still going on in some areas of Bangui although the town center was largely secured.¹⁰¹

[See section [B.4, Women and Children, 4.2.1. Children: Access to School](#) for information on the looting of Bangui schools]

5. The status of the 2008 Libreville Peace Agreements which were reportedly violated by Séléka forces in December 2012

In January 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that Francois Bozize and the Seleka coalition signed a ceasefire agreement in Libreville on 11 January after three days of talks mediated by Central African countries. The Seleka rebels took up arms on 10 December 2012 claiming a breach of the 2008 Libreville Peace Agreements.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ *Le Monde*, Des heurts entre la Séléka et des habitants font plusieurs morts en Centrafrique, 15 April 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/04/15/des-heurts-entre-la-seleka-et-des-habitants-font-plusieurs-morts-en-centrafrique_3159619_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

¹⁰⁰ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique : Au moins 78 corps retrouvés, normalisation en cours à Bangui, 30 March 2013, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20130330112905/francois-bozize-centrafrique-armee-centrafricaine-selekacentrafrique-au-moins-78-corps-retrouves-normalisation-en-cours-a-bangui.html>, accessed 12 June 2013

¹⁰¹ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : 78 corps retrouvés depuis une semaine à Bangui, 29 March 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/03/29/centrafrique-78-corps-retrouves-depuis-une-semaine-a-bangui_3150529_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

¹⁰² *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : Le pouvoir et les rebelles signent un accord de cessez-le-feu, 11 January 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/11/centrafrique-le-pouvoir-et-les-rebelles-signent-un-accord-de-cessez-le-feu_1815858_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

5.1 2013 Libreville Peace Agreements

In March 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that a peace agreement had been signed in Libreville on 11 January 2013 between the Francois Bozize government, the Seleka rebellion and the opposition providing for the establishment of a national unity government after a first attack by the Seleka in December 2012. The Seleka rebels engaged in hostilities for a second time on 23 March 2013 claiming that the agreement had been violated.¹⁰³

In January 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that Francois Bozize and the Seleka coalition signed a ceasefire agreement in Libreville. The agreement provided for the formation of a national unity cabinet, the appointment of a democratic opponent as new Prime Minister, the dissolution of the National Assembly, and legislative elections to be held in 12 months. Francois Bozize was to remain in power until the end of his mandate in 2016. Neither the new Prime Minister nor new ministers were to be candidates in the next elections. All foreign military forces were to withdraw apart from the Central African Multinational Force (“Forces multinationales de l’Afrique centrale”- FOMAC). Prisoners who had been “arrested in the context of the crisis” were to be released.¹⁰⁴

5.2 The effect of the Séléka advance and coup on civilians

[See also [Section A. 4 Overview of the current security situation](#)]

In January 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, while Francois Bozize and the Seleka coalition were signing a ceasefire agreement in Libreville, civilians in the cities of Sibut and Damara on the frontline were fleeing in fear of upcoming violence.¹⁰⁵

In December 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that the Seleka forces captured the cities of Bria (centre of the CAR) on 18 December and Kabo (north) on 19 December after having seized Ndele (north). The rebels looted shops, followed by some civilians taking advantage of the situation. CAR regular soldiers of the FACA retreated and were fleeing towards Bambari (centre south). *Jeune Afrique* reported that in one week, the rebels entered several towns in the north, north east and centre of the CAR: Ndele, Sam Ouandja, Ouadda, Bamingui and Bria. Chad’s regular forces later arrived in Kaga Bandoro (centre) to fight on the side of CAR government forces.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : 78 corps retrouvés depuis une semaine à Bangui, 29 March 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/03/29/centrafrique-78-corps-retrouves-depuis-une-semaine-a-bangui_3150529_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

¹⁰⁴ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : Le pouvoir et les rebelles signent un accord de cessez-le-feu, 11 January 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/11/centrafrique-le-pouvoir-et-les-rebelles-signent-un-accord-de-cessez-le-feu_1815858_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

¹⁰⁵ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : Le pouvoir et les rebelles signent un accord de cessez-le-feu, 11 January 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/11/centrafrique-le-pouvoir-et-les-rebelles-signent-un-accord-de-cessez-le-feu_1815858_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

¹⁰⁶ *Jeune Afrique*, Centrafrique : Le régime de Bozizé ébranlé par les rebelles du Séléka, 19 December 2012, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20121218171228/soudan-tchad-francois-bozize-centrafriquecentrafrique-le->

On 11 December 2012 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* together with French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported on the capture of the city of Ndele by UDFR dissident forces stating that civilians fled towards neighboring cities or into the bush. *Jeune Afrique* stated that since the 2011 peace agreements, Ndele had been controlled by the CPJP and FACA forces. UDFR forces had also seized the towns of Sam Ouandja and Ouadda (located 200 km from Ndele) where there was no continued presence of the regular army.¹⁰⁷

In May 2013, the *UN Secretary-General* reported on the humanitarian situation of children,

"Humanitarian access was severely hampered, especially in Bamingui-Bangoran, Basse Kotto, Ouham, Haute-Kotto, Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou and Vakaga prefectures, owing to the presence of armed groups in those regions. It is estimated that some 395,200 children were deprived of humanitarian assistance in the affected areas owing to security risks."¹⁰⁸

In June 2013, in its draft resolution 23/18, the *UN Human Rights Council* expressed concern at the serious human rights violations perpetrated against the civilian population,

...including crimes, summary executions, rape and other forms of sexual abuse, torture, looting and other serious violations of international human rights law, as well as the arrests, arbitrary detention and destruction of property carried out by all the forces present in the Central African Republic.¹⁰⁹

In June 2013, the *UN Human Rights Council* requested the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* to submit to the Council, at its twenty-fourth session, an interim report on the situation of human rights in the Central African Republic.¹¹⁰ In response to that request, the High Commissioner deployed, from 20 June to 11 July 2013, a fact-finding mission to the Central African Republic to collect information on human rights violations committed in Bangui and other localities between December 2012 and 11 July 2013. The mission examined allegations of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by the former Bozizé regime and the non-State armed group, the Séléka coalition, during the armed conflict from 10 December 2012 to 23 March 2013. It also reviewed allegations of human rights violations committed after the Séléka seized power on 24 March 2013.

In May 2013, the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that CAR's human rights situation had worsened since the coup with violations against civilians widespread,

[regime-de-bozize-ebranle-par-les-rebelles-du-seleka.html](#), accessed 17 June 2013

¹⁰⁷ Jeune Afrique, Centrafrique: L'attaque de Ndélé oeuvre d'une faction rebelle d'un mouvement centrafricain, 11 December 2012, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/actu/20121211T110658Z20121211T110656Z>, accessed 17 June 2013

¹⁰⁸ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 40 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

¹⁰⁹ UN Human Rights Council, Technical assistance to the Central African Republic in the field of human rights, 7 June 2013, http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/23/L.3, accessed 05 November 2013

¹¹⁰ UN Human Rights Council, Technical assistance to the Central African Republic in the field of human rights, 7 June 2013, http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/23/L.3, accessed 05 November 2013

“The existing precarious human rights situation worsened during the conflict from December 2012 to March 2013. Before March 2013, serious and widespread allegations of human rights violations were reported both in areas controlled by Government forces and in those controlled by Seleka. BINUCA [Bureau intégré de l’Organisation des Nations Unies en Centrafrique] received many reports of alleged summary executions and targeted assaults, motivated by the victims’ religious and ethnic identity. Other alleged grave violations include arbitrary arrest and detention (targeting, among others, family members and supporters of opposition parties), torture, recruitment of children, rape, disappearances, kidnapping and attacks on schools. The existence of several mass graves has also been reported.”¹¹¹

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* concluded that, during the conflict, both parties had engaged “gross human rights violations” against civilians which “may amount to war crimes,”

"During the conflict, both parties had engaged in summary executions and extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and looting of private and public property. The Séléka also engaged in sexual violence and grave violations against children. On the basis of the information collected by the mission, those acts constitute gross human rights violations and may amount to war crimes. After 24 March 2013, gross violations of international human rights law, such as summary executions, sexual violence, recruitment of children and looting of property, including hospitals, schools and churches, committed by the Séléka continued unabated.”¹¹²

¹¹¹ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

¹¹² UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

B. Human Rights Issues

1. Constitution and legislation after the coup

In March 2013 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that self-appointed President Michel Djotodia announced that the Constitution would be suspended and the National Assembly dissolved, and that he would rule by decree.¹¹³

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that Michel Djotodia suspended the Constitution,

“By ‘Presidential’ decrees, the Constitution was suspended; the National Assembly, the Constitutional Court and the Government of National Unity were dissolved; and a transitional arrangement was put in place.
[...] Mr. Djotodia had originally indicated his intention to rule by decree.”¹¹⁴

2 Ethnicity

2.1. Domestic and legal framework (Constitution and legislation)

The *Constitution of the Central African Republic* was adopted by referendum on 5 December 2004 and promulgated on 27 December 2004 by Decree n°04-392. The preamble of the *Constitution* affirms that the Central African people are ethnically diverse,

“Proud of their national and linguistic unity, as well as their ethnic, cultural and religious diversity – contributing to the enrichment of their personality,
[...] Engaged in the rule of law based on a plural democracy; ensuring security of people and goods, protecting vulnerable people, minorities and the full exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms.”¹¹⁵

In February 2012 UK NGO supporting indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforests *The Rainforest Foundation UK* reported that a 2003 Ministerial Decree prohibiting the Exploitation and/or exportation of oral traditions of the CAR's cultural minorities for commercial purposes (“Arrêté ministériel portant interdiction d'exploitation et/ou d'exportation des traditions orales des minorités culturelles de Centrafrique à des fins commerciales”) first introduced the notion of

¹¹³ Jeune Afrique, Centrafrique : Au moins 78 corps retrouvés, normalisation en cours à Bangui, 30 March 2013, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20130330112905/francois-bozize-centrafrique-armee-centrafricaine-selekacentrafrique-au-moins-78-corps-retrouves-normalisation-en-cours-a-bangui.html>, accessed 12 June 2013

¹¹⁴ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

¹¹⁵ Constitution de la République Centrafricaine, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

“cultural minority”. *The Rainforest Foundation UK* reported that “the CAR Cultural Charter (Act No.06.002 [of 10 May 2006]¹¹⁶) mentions ethnic minorities although it does not provide any definition.”¹¹⁷ [We were unable to find the original legal texts during the time frame of this research]

In June 2013 the *Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie* web site reported that with regard to the parliamentary mandate,

“Domestic legislation provides no representation for ethnic minorities; however, these groups are not excluded from elections.”¹¹⁸

2.2 Indigenous peoples

The *Act No.08.022 of 17 October 2008 establishing the Forest Code* specifically refers to indigenous peoples (article 1),

“Forest in general and the Central African Forest in particular has multiple functions. It brings fertility to the soil, generates many environmental services, helps to lock carbon up, contributes to the survival and the well-being of populations, in particular the indigenous peoples who are culturally and intimately associated to it as well as the wildlife.”¹¹⁹

The *Act* sets out customary rights of use and benefits arising from forest exploitation, of indigenous peoples (section II).¹²⁰

According to the *ILO* website, the CAR became the first African State to ratify the Convention No.169 on indigenous and tribal peoples.¹²¹

In February 2012 UK NGO supporting indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforests *The Rainforest Foundation UK* in collaboration with the CAR High Commission on Human Rights and Good Governance, local NGOs, indigenous representatives and the International Labour Organisation produced a study into the conformity of the CAR legislation with ILO Convention No.169 on indigenous and tribal peoples and provided recommendations to the authorities. The CAR ratified ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention on 30 August 2010. According to the *Rainforest Foundation UK* there are two groups of indigenous peoples in the CAR namely the Mbororo (Peuls) and the Aka, pejoratively known as Pygmies. The *Rainforest Foundation UK* stated that indigenous peoples had very limited access to

¹¹⁶ Rapport national, République Centrafricaine, Conseil des droits de l'Homme, Assemblée générale des Nations Unies, 23 February 2009, http://epu.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/centrafrique_prepa_rapportnational_AN.pdf, accessed 28 June 2013

¹¹⁷ The Rainforest Foundation, Etude de la législation de la République Centrafricaine au vu de la Convention 169 de l'Organisation internationale du travail relative aux peuples indigènes et tribaux, February 2012, <http://www.mappingforrights.org/files/RFUK%20C169%20CAR%20web%20final.pdf>, accessed 28 June 2013

¹¹⁸ Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, Recueil des pratiques et des procédures parlementaires, République centrafricaine, <http://recueil.apf-francophonie.org/spip.php?article72>, accessed 28 June 2013

¹¹⁹ Loi 08.22 portant Code forestier de la République centrafricaine, 17 October 2008, <http://www2.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/91171/105596/F1906286534/CAF-91171.pdf>, accessed 28 June 2013 [However, parts of the articles on the rights of indigenous peoples are missing (articles 16-22, page 6).]

¹²⁰ Loi 08.22 portant Code forestier de la République centrafricaine, 17 October 2008, <http://www2.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/MONOGRAPH/91171/105596/F1906286534/CAF-91171.pdf>, accessed 28 June 2013 [However, part of the articles on the rights of indigenous peoples is missing (articles 16-22, page 6).]

¹²¹ Organisation internationale du travail, La République centrafricaine ratifie la convention de l'OIT (n° 169) relative aux peuples indigènes et tribaux, 1989, 20 April 2010, http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/WCMS_127377/lang--fr/index.htm, accessed 28 June 2013

justice due to their remote location from justice centres, financial obstacles and language barriers.¹²²

2.3 Treatment (actual and perceived) of ethnic minorities

In June 2013 CAR public news agency *Agence Centrafrique Presse* reported that new Head of State Michel Djotodia held a meeting with CAR's ethnic minorities in Bangui during which he acknowledged discrimination against Albinos people,

"[He] asked for forgiveness from the Albinos people of the CAR for all the stigma, mockery and contempt that they suffered from in the CAR".¹²³

In January 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* stated that after hostilities broke out on 10 December 2012 a witch-hunt had been launched against the Goula and Rounga ethnic groups (from north and north-east of the CAR) on the grounds that they composed most of the Seleka rebellion. Many had disappeared and were not registered in regular detention centres. According to Mike Steve Yambete, Coordinator of the Coalition of Citizens actions militia ("Coalition des actions citoyennes"- COAC),

"[...] an important number of rebels are being held at the Investigation and Research Section's office ("Section de recherches et d'investigation"- SRI) in Bangui."¹²⁴

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that in December 2012 roadblocks were used by government backed groups to single out people of particular ethnic groups some of whom were then imprisoned,

"During the advance of Seleka rebels toward Bangui in December, government-backed youth groups set up roadblocks in the capital and detained hundreds of persons of particular ethnic groups as suspected rebels or sympathizers. Police then formally arrested and imprisoned some suspects."¹²⁵

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that violence against the Mbororo was a problem,

"Violence by unidentified persons, bandits, and other nonstate armed entities against the Mbororo was a problem, since they continued to suffer disproportionately from civil disorder in the north. Their cattle wealth made them attractive targets. Additionally, since many citizens viewed the Mbororo as inherently foreign due to their transnational migratory patterns, they faced

¹²² The Rainforest Foundation, Etude de la législation de la République Centrafricaine au vu de la Convention 169 de l'Organisation internationale du travail relative aux peuples indigènes et tribaux, February 2012, <http://www.mappingforrights.org/files/RFUK%20C169%20CAR%20web%20final.pdf>, accessed 28 June 2013

¹²³ Agence Centrafrique Presse, Le Président Michel Djotodia Am Nondroko exprime le mea-culpa envers les minorités ethniques centrafricaines, 5 June 2013, http://www.acap-cf.info/Le-President-Michel-Djotodia-Am-Nondroko-exprime-le-mea-culpa-envers-les-minorites-ethniques-centrafricains_a5316.html, accessed 28 June 2013

¹²⁴ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : Le sort des prisonniers politiques toujours en question, 25 January 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-le-sort-des-prisonniers-politiques-toujours-en-question>, accessed 17 June 2013

¹²⁵ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

occasional discrimination with regard to government services and protections. In recent years Mbororo have armed themselves against attacks resulting from disputes with farmers upset over the presence of grazing cattle. Several of these altercations during the year resulted in deaths.

In April, Mbororo herders in Boali claimed the medical staff routinely denied them access to the local health clinic."¹²⁶

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that the Ba'aka faced social and economic discrimination and some were subjected to enslavement,

"Despite constitutional protections and the ratification of the International Labor Organization (ILO's) Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, there was societal discrimination against Ba'aka, the earliest known inhabitants of the rain forest in the South. Ba'aka constituted approximately 1 to 2 percent of the population. They continued to have little say in decisions affecting their lands, culture, traditions, and the exploitation of natural resources. Forest-dwelling Ba'aka in particular were subject to social and economic discrimination and exploitation, which the government did little to prevent. Despite repeated promises, the government took no steps to issue identity cards to Ba'aka; according to many human rights groups, the lack of identity cards effectively denied them access to greater civil rights. While local governments often informally allocated land to accommodate their settlement, this land was not titled to its residents and was not effectively demarcated.

The Ba'aka, including children, were often coerced into agricultural, domestic, and other types of labor. They were considered to be the slaves of members of other local ethnic groups, and even when they were remunerated for labor, their wages were far below those prescribed by the labor code and lower than wages paid to members of other groups.

Refugees International reported that Ba'aka were effectively "second-class citizens," and the popular prejudice that they were barbaric and subhuman further caused them to be excluded from mainstream society."¹²⁷

In September 2011 French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported ethnic clashes between the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR) and the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) in Bria causing 30 deaths. Each side was constituted of members of two rival ethnic groups,

"The Ronga for the CPJP versus the Goula for the UFDR – their conflict has been lasting for years, particularly because they fight to gain control over diamond."¹²⁸

¹²⁶ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

¹²⁷ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

¹²⁸ AFP, Centrafrique : 30 morts à Bria en une semaine, 19 September 2011, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hCB3fmFHKRSivdthFKBYMQJZvYaA?docId=CNG.ddffb89bff5296c5a41b56a817b797f0.01>, accessed 27 June 2013

2.4 Protection of ethnic minorities

In February 2012 UK NGO supporting indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforests *The Rainforest Foundation UK* reported that in two of CAR's official documents – the Action plan on Indigenous peoples and 2009 Document on the Strategy to Reduce Poverty – the Akas and the Moboros were considered to be the groups which were most affected by poverty and that the government would concentrate its efforts on them.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ The Rainforest Foundation, Etude de la législation de la République Centrafricaine au vu de la Convention 169 de l'Organisation internationale du travail relative aux peuples indigènes et tribaux, February 2012, <http://www.mappingforrights.org/files/RFUK%20C169%20CAR%20web%20final.pdf>, accessed 28 June 2013

3. Freedom of Expression and Association

3.1 Domestic legal framework (Constitution and legislation)

Article 12 of the 2004 *Constitution of the Central African Republic* provides for the free formation of associations unless they are contrary to public order,

“All citizens have the right to freely form associations, groups, companies and public service institutions, subject to compliance with laws and regulations. Associations, groups, companies and institutions whose activities are contrary to public order and to the unity and cohesion of the Central African people are prohibited.”¹³⁰

Article 13 of the 2004 *Constitution of the Central African Republic* provides for freedom of expression,

“Freedom to inform, to express and disseminate one’s opinions through speech, writing and image, subject to the rights of others, is guaranteed. [...] Freedom of the press is recognised and guaranteed. It is exercised under the conditions laid down by law. The exercise of this freedom and equal access to the State media are provided by an independent body with regulatory and decision-making power; the status of which is determined by law.”¹³¹

In October 2012 international NGO *Reporters Without Borders* stated in its annual world report that media offences were decriminalised in 2005,

“In 2005, a media freedom law was promulgated, media offences were decriminalized and the High Council for Communication was created.”¹³²

In its 2013 World Press Freedom Index, international NGO *Reporters Without Borders* ranked the CAR 65 out of 179 countries; however,

“This index does not reflect the January 2013 turmoil in the Central African Republic (65th, -3) but its impact on media freedom is already a source of extreme concern.”¹³³

3.2 Treatment (actual and perceived) of members and supporters of political opposition parties

¹³⁰ Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

¹³¹ Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

¹³² Reporters sans frontières, Rapport mondial, République centrafricaine, October 2012, <http://fr.rsfsf.org/report-rca.8.html>, accessed 2 July 2013

In English, <http://en.rsfsf.org/report-car.8.html>

¹³³ Reporters sans frontières, Classement mondial 2013, http://fr.rsfsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=1054, accessed 2 July 2013

In English, http://en.rsfsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=1054

3.2.1 Since the Seleka coup

In April 2013 Chadian opposition media *Mouvement d'action pour le changement au Tchad* reported that Chadian political opponent Ismail Idriss Ismail, a former Minister, was being extradited to the Chadian authorities by the Seleka.¹³⁴ According to the *Mouvement d'action pour le changement au Tchad*, human rights organisations, particularly the Chadian Convention for Human Rights (“Convention Tchadienne pour la Défense des Droits Humains”), feared for Ismail Idriss Ismail's life after his extradition.¹³⁵

In May 2013, the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that in rebel held areas officials have been targeted and relatives of former government officials have sought help from the U.N.,

“In a pattern already witnessed in the areas controlled by the rebellion since December 2012, administrative and political officials have been specifically targeted. In Bangui, most of the members of the former government took refuge in the MICOPAX [Mission de la consolidation de la paix en République centrafricaine] and BINUCA [Bureau Intégré de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en Centrafrique] premises. BINUCA continues to receive distress calls for help and assistance from the relatives of the former government officials, as well as other executives stranded or in hiding.”¹³⁶

In June 2013 *IRIN* reported that after Seleka forces took control of Bangui they "settled scores" with violence against members of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA).¹³⁷

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported that in Bangui from May to August 2013, former agents of public order were targeted in violence by Seleka forces,

“Civilian murders and assassinations continued to be regularly committed by Seleka militiamen. From information gathered, these murders and killings were committed during looting, racketeering and “disarmament” operations, and also targeted former agents of public order or were carried out in reprisal for protests by the population.”¹³⁸

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported that abductions by the Seleka are commonplace and that reasons for people being targeted included for their status as former members of security forces or for behaviour perceived to be contrary to Seleka interests,

¹³⁴ *Mouvement d'action pour le changement au Tchad*, Centrafrique – Tchad : l'opposant tchadien Ismail Idriss Ismail extradé à N'Djamena, 22 April 2013, <http://www.mact-chad.com/centrafrique-tchad-lopposant-tchadien-ismail-idriss-ismail-extrade-a-ndjamena/>, accessed 7 February 2014

¹³⁵ *Mouvement d'action pour le changement au Tchad*, Centrafrique – Tchad : l'opposant tchadien Ismail Idriss Ismail extradé à N'Djamena, 22 April 2013, <http://www.mact-chad.com/centrafrique-tchad-lopposant-tchadien-ismail-idriss-ismail-extrade-a-ndjamena/>, accessed 7 February 2014

¹³⁶ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

¹³⁷ IRIN, CAR crisis remains dire - and neglected, 6 June 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98179/car-crisis-remains-dire-and-neglected>, accessed 20 October 2013

¹³⁸ FIDH, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

“Abductions by the Séléka are commonplace in Bangui since the coup d’Etat and it is creating panic among the population. People are targeted for supposedly having money, for their status (i.e., ex-FACAs) or for behaviour considered to be contrary to Séléka interests. Some of the abductions end by executions. Other people are released after one or more days in hidden detention and sometimes after undergoing torture or ill-treatment.”¹³⁹

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported on abductions by the Seleka, including the disappearance of a Corporal,

“A family member of Corporal N, alias M, provided the Central African League of Human Rights with a written account of the latter’s abduction and death. Born on 23 June 1985 in Bangui, M, who had 6 children, lived in the Combattant quarter. M received a telephone call from an individual who introduced himself as his “two-man team partner” and asked him to meet opposite the town hall in the eighth district. Once there, he was seized and abducted by the heavily armed Seleka who departed in two vehicles, one a car with registered plates and the other a BJ 75 pick-up truck. He was taken away, having been beaten with rifle butts in front of several witnesses. After a search, the body of M was found in the morgue at the community hospital where it had been deposited by the Central African Red Cross.”¹⁴⁰

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported that the Seleka carried out attacks in retribution against public protests. In June 2013 *FIDH* reported that protestors were violently suppressed,

“On the afternoon of 28 June 2013, in the neighbourhood of Gobongo in the fourth district of Bangui, the inhabitants, the majority of them young men, erected barricades blocking the traffic. They were protesting against the killing of a young man from their neighbourhood, who had been abducted by Seleka forces as he was studying in class the previous day. Relatives had found his body in the morgue of the community hospital.

This protest movement was violently suppressed by the Seleka who fired live ammunition at the protesters, killing 6 (according to BINUCA) and wounding many others, some of whom were still being treated in hospital. Of the wounded taken to the community hospital, 2 subsequently died from their injuries. The Seleka also looted shops and houses in the neighbourhood until the arrival of MICOPAX troops at the end of the day, which led to exchanges of gunfire and the killing and wounding of Seleka fighters, before the rebels were dispersed.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ FIDH, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

¹⁴⁰ FIDH, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

¹⁴¹ FIDH, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported that in April 2013, in the area of Mbres-Kaga-Bandoro, 6 people were killed by the Seleka in retribution for the murder of a Seleka member,

“on April 14, 2013, the Séléka set fire to 272 homes and killed 6 people in 6 villages in retribution for the murder of a member of the Séléka by villagers.”¹⁴²

In September 2013 *FIDH* reported that three men were detained in July 2013 by the Seleka after they were found in possession of a photocopy of a leaflet calling for a day to denounce crimes carried out by the Seleka,

“Mr. AA also reported to the members of the mission about an abduction he witnessed. On July 4, 2013, a youngster was taken by surprise in front of the community hospital by the Séléka photocopying a tract calling for a dead city day to denounce the crimes being carried out by the Séléka. They captured the youngster and then proceeded to get the chief supervisor of the community hospital accusing him of giving the original tract to the boy. Alarmed and worried that the events would take a bad turn, Mr. AA asked the Séléka if he could accompany the supervisor and the boy. They were taken to *Camp de Roux*. There, they found themselves facing some twenty men bearing arms who asked them to sit on the ground. Mr. AA refused to listen to the order in spite of the arms pointed at him. Finally, they were led to a room where at the end of a discussion, the boy finally admitted that the tract was given to him by the supervisor’s secretary (she had stopped coming to the hospital for fear of being kidnapped by the Séléka). On July 6, the chief supervisor and the boy were still at *Camp de Roux*. They were to have had a hearing in front of the prosecutor of the Republic the night of the 4th to the 5th of July.

On July 5, 2013, during the *FIDH* mission, an American journalist was an eyewitness to the abduction of two men: Auguste, 35 years old, garage owner, living in the Miskine neighbourhood; Raymond Moussa, between 35 and 38 35 years old, driver. The two men were bound up and made to lay in the back of a pick-up truck by the Séléka. According to the information gathered from the onlookers, they were captured while they were reading the tract calling for a dead city day denouncing the crimes committed by the Séléka. According to the parents of both of these men, they were taken to *Camp de Roux*.¹⁴³

In September 2013 the *International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH)* reported that battles for increased power are being played out between different Seleka leaders, leading to detentions and killings,

“Once in power, the head of state reached out to Abdoulaye Miskine, leader of the FDPC, calling on him to return to Bangui. Miskine for a time had rallied to the Seleka coalition before distancing himself due to “differences of opinion”. Following his refusal, Seleka elements launched an attack against the FDPC

¹⁴² *FIDH*, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

¹⁴³ *FIDH*, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

rebels between 2 and 4 April 2013, killing numerous militiamen and, according to some reports, wounding their leader.

The Central African Minister of Communication, Gazam Betty, announced on 30 June 2013 that the Minister of Water and Forests, Mohamed Dhaffane, leader of the CPSK, one of the armed militias which make up the Seleka, had been dismissed from his post and arrested the previous day. His brother had also been arrested. According to the Minister of Communication's public statement, "Everything points to General Dhaffane recruiting mercenaries and buying weapons [...] it is not known for what purpose.

In addition, these mercenaries are committing acts which are out of control and tarnishing the image of the president. Minister Dhaffane has been arrested and placed in custody while his house is searched." According to information gathered by the members of the mission, Dhaffane's arrest is believed to have taken place within the confines of Roux camp, where the head of state resides. A meeting between the two men reportedly went badly and the president then demanded that his guard arrest Dhaffane. Some of those who spoke to the FIDH mission members suggested that the president had reacted badly to the minister's statements on national radio and *Radio France Internationale* (RFI), calling for a meeting of Seleka leaders to settle the security issue. A number of them had invested serious ambitions in Dhaffane who had the potential to overshadow the president's authority. This interpretation of events could explain the speed of his arrest and detention, carried out illegally"¹⁴⁴

See also Section A, [2. Brief overview \(general information\) on paramilitary forces and pro-government \(Bozize\) militias \(brief history, purpose, activity, areas of activity, and human rights abuses committed, including forced recruitment\)](#)

3.2.2 Under Francois Bozize's regime

In its 2012 country report the *USDOS* reported that security forces detained suspected members of the Gula and Rounga ethnic groups, "who were typically found among the Seleka alliance rebels"

"During the advance of Seleka rebels toward Bangui in December, government-backed youth groups set up roadblocks in the capital and detained hundreds of persons of particular ethnic groups as suspected rebels or sympathizers. Police then formally arrested and imprisoned some suspects."¹⁴⁵

However the *USDOS* further stated that there were no reports of the government forces killing members of the political opposition although soldiers were reported to have killed civilians suspected of supporting armed groups,

¹⁴⁴ FIDH, Central African Republic, A country in the hands of the Seleka criminals, September 2013, <http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/rca616a2013basdef.pdf>, accessed 5 March 2014

¹⁴⁵ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

“There were no reports that the government or its agents killed members of opposing political groups, but soldiers, particularly members of the presidential guard, killed civilians they suspected of being bandits or supporting armed groups. Both government security forces and armed groups killed civilians in the course of conflict in the northeast.”¹⁴⁶

In its 2012 country report the *USDOS* reported that there were reports of politically motivated disappearances,

“There were several reports of possibly politically motivated disappearances. For example, on July 11, Jean Bianga, the chauffeur of the former minister of finance, was arrested by the Central Office for the Repression of Banditry (OCRB) for unknown reasons and later disappeared from police custody. Police authorities were unable or unwilling to provide Bianga’s family with information on his whereabouts or condition, and he remained missing at year’s end.”¹⁴⁷

On August 14, Serge Venant Magna, an official in the Ministry of Finance, was arrested on unknown charges in Bangui. His whereabouts were not disclosed, and he was not allowed access to any visitors. Magna remained missing at year’s end.

In its 2012 annual report *Amnesty International* reported that the freedom of movement for some members of the opposition were restricted,

“Several members of the opposition and at least one journalist were barred without explanation from travelling out of the country.”¹⁴⁸

In its 2012 country report the *USDOS* also reported that the freedom of movement of members of political parties was restricted,

“Members of political parties were not always able to move about the country without restriction; many had to obtain authorization from the government before traveling.”¹⁴⁹

In April 2013 international Francophone TV *TV5 Monde* reported on two former political opponents of Francois Bozize who had been detained and tortured in the Bossembele military prison “where Francois Bozize would send his political

¹⁴⁶ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

¹⁴⁷ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

¹⁴⁸ Amnesty International, Rapport 2012, La situation des droits humains dans le monde, République centrafricaine, 2012, <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/region/central-african-republic/report-2012>, accessed 18 July 2013

In English : <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/central-african-republic/report-2012>

¹⁴⁹ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

opponents.” Serge Venant Magna was Secretary-General of the National Youth Council (“Conseil national de la jeunesse”) and like all other prisoners, he had been accused of trying to destabilise the regime. The second former opponent who testified was a Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP) leader named Idriss Yaya.¹⁵⁰

According to *TV5 Monde* the two former opponents to Francois Bozize reported being subjected to regular torture (with the use of various instruments like ropes, sticks, knives and stones). The CPJP rebel leader had been detained for two years and had been beaten at least once a week. They were held with 17 prisoners in a 40 sqm cell where they would stay 24 hours a day. They were given one meal a day and one bottle of dirty water to share. Prisoners were subjected to mock executions. They also witnessed summary executions carried out on others. They were liberated by the Seleka one week prior to the interview.¹⁵¹ According to *TV5 Monde* no one knows how many people were tortured and perished in the Bossembele military prison over the years.¹⁵²

In May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported that according to Minister for Justice Arsene Sende, Francois Bozize was suspected of having ordered 119 summary executions which were perpetrated by his personal guards. According to the Minister, former Minister Charles Massi, Head of the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) rebel group was a victim of such action,

“[Charles Massi] was arrested at the beginning of 2010 in Chad, handed to Central African authorities and later executed by President Bozize’s personal guards.”¹⁵³

According to *Le Monde*, Minister for Justice Arsene Sende also stated that about 10 people suspected of being part of the Seleka forces or of having close relationships with them had been executed on 23 March 2013 by an officer belonging to Francois Bozize’s personal guard at Ndres Cimetry (north of the capital).¹⁵⁴

In its 2012 country reports the *USDOS* reported that approval was required to hold a public political meeting and that no approvals were granted during the year,

¹⁵⁰TV5 Monde, Centrafrique : Bangui aux mains des rebelles de la Séléka, Reportage : deux oppsants à Bozizé racontent la prison de Bossembélé, 1 April 2013, <http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Centrafrique/p-24803-Centrafrique-Bangui-aux-mains-des-rebelles-de-la-Seleka.htm>, accessed 7 February 2014

¹⁵¹TV5 Monde, Centrafrique : Bangui aux mains des rebelles de la Séléka, Reportage : deux oppsants à Bozizé racontent la prison de Bossembélé, 1 April 2013, <http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Centrafrique/p-24803-Centrafrique-Bangui-aux-mains-des-rebelles-de-la-Seleka.htm>, accessed 7 February 2014

¹⁵²TV5 Monde, Centrafrique : Bangui aux mains des rebelles de la Séléka, Reportage : deux oppsants à Bozizé racontent la prison de Bossembélé, 1 April 2013, <http://www.tv5.org/cms/chaine-francophone/info/Les-dossiers-de-la-redaction/Centrafrique/p-24803-Centrafrique-Bangui-aux-mains-des-rebelles-de-la-Seleka.htm>, accessed 7 February 2014

¹⁵³ Le Monde, Centrafrique : Bozizé visé par une enquête pour violations des droits de l'homme, 4 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/04/centrafrique-bozize-vise-par-une-enquete-pour-violations-des-droits-de-l-homme_3171101_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

¹⁵⁴ Le Monde, Centrafrique : Bozizé visé par une enquête pour violations des droits de l'homme, 4 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/04/centrafrique-bozize-vise-par-une-enquete-pour-violations-des-droits-de-l-homme_3171101_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

“The constitution provides for the right of assembly; however, the government routinely restricted this right and prevented political opposition groups from conducting public events. Any association intending to hold a public political meeting was required to obtain the Ministry of Interior’s approval; however, no such approval was granted during the year. During the year the government prevented all opposition groups from meeting by refusing permits for gatherings. Political opposition groups, which on several occasions requested authorization to organize public meetings, were also refused permission by the minister of public security during the year.”¹⁵⁵

In its 2012 country report the *USDOS* reported that two political leaders arrested on suspicion of trying to destabilise the government were released by a judge,

“In January the political leader of the APRD, Jean-Jacques Demafouth, as well as a sitting member of the National Assembly, Gontron Djono Ahaba, and two leaders from the UFDR were arrested on suspicion of forming a rebel coalition to destabilize the government. In April a judge ordered them freed and determined the government had no concrete evidence of a plot.”¹⁵⁶

[See also Section [C.1.a, Impunity for extrajudicial killings](#) and [Section C, Other Human Rights Issues](#), information on Francois Bozize’s “personal prisoners” in Camp de Roux¹⁵⁷ and “political prisoners” in Bossembele military camp¹⁵⁸]

3.3 Treatment of civil society, human rights and political activists

In October 2013 *Amnesty International* reported concern at the treatment of human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, journalists and civil society members.¹⁵⁹ *Amnesty* reported that several leaders of human rights organisations had gone into hiding having received death threats for speaking out against Seleka abuses. *Amnesty* stated that looting, attacks and threats had "paralyzed" the activities of humanitarian organisations,

"Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the rights and safety of human rights defenders, humanitarian workers, journalists and members of

¹⁵⁵ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

¹⁵⁶ United States Department of State, Country Report on Human rights Practices 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 4 March 2014

¹⁵⁷ France 24, Témoignage exclusif d'un ancien prisonnier "personnel" de Bozizé, 31 March 2013, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20130331-centrafrique-ancien-prisonnier-personnel-bozize-temoigne-mackpayen>, accessed 13 June 2013

¹⁵⁸ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombe-le-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

¹⁵⁹ Amnesty International, Central African Republic, Human rights crisis spiralling out of control, October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/003/2013/en/b8c7e6b7-0671-486e-82fd-bde5359b01de/afr190032013en.html>, accessed 2 November 2013

civil society organizations in general. Several leaders of human rights organizations have gone into hiding and others have fled the country after they were threatened with death by Seleka gunmen. The gunmen have looted property belonging to the organizations, including UN agencies and their workers, as well as orphanages and centres for homeless children."

[] Human rights organizations targeted by Seleka soldiers include Maison de l'enfant et le femme pygmées (MEFP). Seleka soldiers looted the property of MEFP, including four vehicles and 11 motorcycles, on 25 March 2013. When during subsequent weeks MEFP leaders complained to Seleka commanders about the looting they received death threats. The situation became so threatening to the MEFP leaders that they went into hiding and subsequently fled the country. Jérôme Sitamon, the coordinator of MEFP, and several of his colleagues were still living in a neighbouring country at the start of October 2013. As a result of the death threats and looting, MEFP activities stopped and the beneficiaries were abandoned."¹⁶⁰

In October 2013 *Amnesty International* reported that human rights defenders have been targeted for speaking out against violations or if Seleka forces suspected that they were collecting witness testimonies,

"Those who were regularly on the run in August 2013 included Fernand Mandejabo, leader of the the Réseau national des organisations de jeunesse en droit de l'homme (RNJDH). He told Amnesty International researchers that Seleka soldiers had on several occasions visited his home and asked for him. He had as a result resorted to sleeping in a different place each night and not using his car, which is known to Seleka soldiers. Father Frédéric Nakombo, the national Secretary General of the Roman Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission had also been threatened because Seleka soldiers believed he was collecting testimonies of victims of human rights violations. Armed Seleka soldiers had visited his office on several occasions but not found him."¹⁶¹

In October 2013 *Amnesty* reported that humanitarian workers were killed on their return from work assisting victims of abuses,

"Humanitarian workers in the CAR have effectively risked their lives while working to assist victims of human rights violations, including those displaced by the armed conflict. Two Central Africans working for the Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement (ACTED)²⁶ were shot and killed on 7 September 2013 by Seleka soldiers on the outskirts of Bossangoa in central CAR. The workers were reportedly returning to their base in Bossangoa when they were stopped by Seleka soldiers. Sources in the CAR said that the soldiers identified the workers and severely beat them. The sources who saw the ACTED workers being beaten later telephoned ACTED

¹⁶⁰ Amnesty International, Central African Republic, Human rights crisis spiralling out of control, October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/003/2013/en/b8c7e6b7-0671-486e-82fd-bde5359b01de/afr190032013en.html>, accessed 2 November 2013

¹⁶¹ Amnesty International, Central African Republic, Human rights crisis spiralling out of control, October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/003/2013/en/b8c7e6b7-0671-486e-82fd-bde5359b01de/afr190032013en.html>, accessed 2 November 2013

managers to establish their fate and were informed that the workers had been executed by Seleka soldiers."¹⁶²

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 10 young members of the Network of Central African Youth Organisations ("Réseau des Organisations des Jeunes de Centrafrique"-ROJECA) had been arrested and detained for 9 days while they were heading towards Mbaiki (south) for their activities. They were accused of not being in possession of all the necessary documentation needed for internal travel and were reportedly suspected by the regime of aiming to cause political destabilisation. No charge was made against them but they feared for their security. They declared "we know members of the intelligence services now follow us."¹⁶³

3.4 Treatment of journalists, other media professionals and bloggers

In October 2013 *Reporters Without Borders* expressed concern at the threat to journalists in CAR,

"from the "Extraordinary Committee for the Defence of Democratic Achievements" (Comité extraordinaire de défense des acquis démocratiques-CEDAD) a new police organization led by Mahamat Nouradine Adam, a general in the former Seleka rebel coalition that ousted the previous government.

The editors of three Bangui-based dailies – Julien Bella of *Centrafrique Matin*, Maka Gbossokotto of *Le Citoyen* and Ulrich Landry Ngopkele of *Quotidien de Bangui* – have all been subjected to heavy-handed interrogation in the past month after publishing stories criticizing the CEDAD's activities. None of these interrogations was sanctioned by judicial procedure."¹⁶⁴

In October 2013 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that during interrogation by CEDAD editors had received death threats, been hooded and held in a cell,

"Ngopkele was summoned to Gen. Nouradine's base on 9 October and was subjected to an initial interrogation there before being taken, with a hood over his head, to an unknown location and held for several hours in a cell. He was then interrogated a second time by Gen. Nouradine himself, who wanted to know the source of a 4 October article headlined "Followers of Gen. Nouradine beaten at Roux Camp," referring to difficulties in the succession to the position

¹⁶² Amnesty International, Central African Republic, Human rights crisis spiralling out of control, October 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR19/003/2013/en/b8c7e6b7-0671-486e-82fd-bde5359b01de/afr190032013en.html>, accessed 2 November 2013

¹⁶³ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : Dix jeunes libérés après avoir été accusés de tentative de déstabilisation de pouvoir, 9 July 2012, <http://reseau-des-journalistes-rca.wordpress.com/2012/07/09/bangui-dix-jeunes-liberes-apres-avoir-ete-accuses-de-tentative-de-destabilisation-de-pouvoir>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

¹⁶⁴ Reporters Without Borders, Seleka disbanded but journalists still threatened, 18 October 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/rca-seleka-disbanded-but-journalists-15-10-2013,45341.html>, accessed 20 October 2013

of security minister. Forced to apologise before being released, Ngopkele continues to be harassed and threatened by CEDAD members.

When Gbossokotto responded to a police summons on 4 October, he was taken into custody by Gen. Nouradine's officers, who told him he got his facts wrong in an article in *Le Citoyen* and accused him of using a hostile tone towards Seleka. *Le Citoyen* subsequently published a retraction.

Bella was summoned by the CEDAD on 30 September for questioning about an article in *Centrafrique Matin*'s 25 September issue revealing the existence of a secret CEDAD prison. The CEDAD police officers accused him of divulging classified information and trying to "destabilize" the government, and threatened to kill him. The next day, *Centrafrique Matin* published an article in which Bella apologized for revealing the prison's existence and said the CEDAD was protecting the nation."¹⁶⁵

In August 2013 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that there had been an increase in threats and violence against journalists including threats, kidnap and interrogation,

"The intimidation of journalists and ransacking of media after the Seleka coalition seized power by force in March already dealt a severe blow to freedom of information, but a whole new level has been reached in the past few days," *Reporters Without Borders* said.

"There has been a major escalation in harassment, threats and intimidation against journalists with privately-owned media, which is being carried out or encouraged by the authorities. We call on the government in Bangui to put a stop to this at once."¹⁶⁶

In April 2013 *Afrique Expansion Magazine*, an international magazine focusing on economy and business opportunities and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that all Central African Republic media— except State media— staged a one-day suspension of publication to protest against the pressure, threats and lootings they were facing. The Union of Central African Journalists ("L'Union des journalistes de Centrafrique"- UJCA) started the movement. UJCA President, Maka Gbossokotto stated that,

"Central African media have suffered from looting, deterioration of their working tools, threats and intimidation in exercising their profession to inform. The security of media professionals is threatened every day, and freedom of expression is not guaranteed by the authorities."¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Reporters Without Borders, Seleka disbanded but journalists still threatened, 18 October 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/rca-seleka-disbanded-but-journalists-15-10-2013.45341.html>, accessed 20 October 2013

¹⁶⁶ Reporters Without Borders, Security climate worsens for journalists, 8 August 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/car-security-climate-worsens-for-08-08-2013.45033.html>, accessed 20 October 2013

¹⁶⁷ Afrique Expansion Magazine, Centrafrique : "Journée sans médias" pour dénoncer menaces et pressions, 29 April 2013, <http://www.afriqueexpansion.com/depeches-afp/8964-centrafrique--journee-sans-mediasq-pour-denoncer-menaces-et-pressions-.html>, accessed 18 July 2013

According to *Afrique Expansion Magazine*, journalist Faustin Bambou, also member of UJCA, stated that the pressure came both from the authorities and some Seleka elements on the ground. Faustin Bambou stated that some journalists have received death threats.¹⁶⁸

In March 2013 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that several news media were robbed or ransacked in the days following the Seleka's entry into the capital,

"Momet Mathurin Constant Nestor, the editor of the privately-owned newspaper *Le Confident*, described to Reporters Without Borders and its Kinshasa-based partner organization, Journalist in Danger, how his newspaper was ransacked on 24 and 25 March.

"The rebels have wiped out all my investments of the past 10 years," he said. "It will be some time before I will be able to resume operating." Referring to newly-ousted President Bozizé, he added: "I don't know why they targeted me because neither I nor *Le Confident* were part of the Bozizé system."

Another local journalist said: "We are in the presence of vandals who are looting everything in their path."

Members of the Seleka rebel force also looted the UN radio station, *Radio Ndeke Luka*, taking one of its cars and five motorcycles, smashing office furniture and stealing at least two laptop computers. ID papers, money and other personal effects were taken from the station's manager, Sylvie Panika."¹⁶⁹

In February 2013 international NGO *Reporters Without Borders* reported that Radio Be Oko journalist Elisabeth Blanche Olofio was reported dead for a month before eventually being found alive but injured. She was targeted and attacked by the Seleka coalition as they considered her to have a "sharp tongue." Elisabeth stated that about 30 rebels surrounded her house and beat her unconscious.¹⁷⁰

3.4.1. Censorship or content restrictions and fines

In April 2013 *Afrique Expansion Magazine*, an international magazine focusing on economy and business opportunities and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that,

¹⁶⁸ *Afrique Expansion Magazine*, Centrafrique : "Journée sans médias" pour dénoncer menaces et pressions, 29 April 2013, <http://www.afriqueexpansion.com/depeches-afp/8964-centrafrique--journee-sans-mediasq-pour-denoncer-menaces-et-pressions-.html>, accessed 18 July 2013

¹⁶⁹ Reporters Without Borders, Call for compensation after rebels ransack and loot Bangui media, 27 March 2013, <http://en.rsf.org/car-call-for-compensation-after-rebels-27-03-2013,44272.html>, 20 October 2013

¹⁷⁰ Reporters sans frontières, Passée pour morte pendant un mois, une journaliste raconte son calvaire, 27 February 2013, <http://fr.rsf.org/rca-radios-communautaires-saccagees-10-01-2013,43891.html>, accessed 2 July 2013

“Several newspaper headquarters as well as radio stations, including ‘Radio nationale’, private radio ‘Radio Ndeke Luka’ and Catholic radio ‘Radio Notre Dame’ were looted at the end of March while the Seleka took over Bangui.”¹⁷¹

In October 2012 international NGO *Reporters Without Borders* stated in its annual world report that self-censorship was common,

“Intimidation and arrests of journalists have declined considerably since 2003, while relations between the government and media, which were terrible from 1993 to 2003, have improved. But journalists still suffer at the hands of an obsolete judicial system. Old political hatred dies hard and journalists are often the targets of ‘irritable’ elements within the army.

[...] Relations between the media and local authorities are extremely tense and radio stations have to censor themselves.”¹⁷²

In October 2012 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that editor Ferdinand Samba had been sentenced to jail on the charge of libelling before being pardoned by President Bozize,

“Ferdinand Samba, the editor of the daily ‘Le Démocrate’ was sentenced in January 2012 to 10 months in prison for libelling President Bozize’s nephew, finance and budget minister Sylvain Ndotoungai. He spent three months in prison before finally being pardoned by the president on 3 May [2012], World Press Freedom Day, which his colleagues had decided to boycott in protest against his arrest.”¹⁷³

In its 2012 report on the CAR *Amnesty International* stated that a climate of self-censorship was prevalent in the news media and reported on the arrest of editors Faustin Bambou and Cyrus Emmanuel Sandy,

“In July [2011], Faustin Bambou, editor of the weekly ‘Les Collines de l’Oubangui’, and Cyrus Emmanuel Sandy, editor of the daily ‘Médias’, were fined and released from custody after being held for weeks in connection with their coverage of public protests by retired military officers claiming the government had deprived them of EU funds. The prosecution had sought three-year prison terms and higher fines on charges of ‘inciting hatred’ and ‘endangering the security of the state’.”¹⁷⁴

In July 2011 *Reporters Without Borders* reported that journalists Faustin Bambou and Cyrus Emmanuel Sandy were ordered to pay a fine of 300,000 FCFA (458 euros) for

¹⁷¹ Afrique Expansion Magazine, Centrafrique : "Journée sans médias" pour dénoncer menaces et pressions, 29 April 2013, <http://www.afriqueexpansion.com/depeches-afp/8964-centrafrique--journee-sans-mediasq-pour-denoncer-menaces-et-pressions-.html>, accessed 18 July 2013

¹⁷² Reporters Without Borders, Journalists recounts ordeal after being reported dead for month, 27 February 2013, http://en.rsf.org/rca-community-radio-stations-ransacked-10-01-2013_43892.html, 20 October 2013

¹⁷³ Reporters sans frontières, Rapport mondial, République centrafricaine, October 2012, <http://fr.rsf.org/report-rca.8.html>, accessed 2 July 2013

In English, <http://en.rsf.org/report-car.8.html>

¹⁷⁴ Amnesty International, Rapport 2012, La situation des droits humains dans le monde, République centrafricaine, 2012, <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/region/central-african-republic/report-2012>, accessed 18 July 2013

In English : <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/central-african-republic/report-2012>

libelling the Delegate Minister of National Defence (Ministre délégué à la Défense nationale), Jean-Francis Bozize.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ Reporters sans frontières, Faustin Bambou et Cyrus Emmanuel Sandy remis en liberté et condamnés à une amende, 11 July 2011, <http://fr.rsf.org/republique-centrafricaine-trois-ans-de-prison-ferme-cinq-ans-07-07-2011,40619.html>, accessed 18 July 201

4. Women and Children

4.1 Domestic legal framework

4.1.1 Women

The *Constitution of the Central African Republic* was adopted by referendum on 5 December 2004 and promulgated on 27 December 2004 by Decree n°04-392.¹⁷⁶

Article 3, paragraph 2, provides that,

“No one shall be subjected to torture, rape, ill-treatment or cruel, inhuman, degrading or humiliating treatment”.¹⁷⁷

Article 5 paragraph 1 guarantees,

Equality of all human beings before the law regardless of race, ethnicity, region, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status.¹⁷⁸

Article 6, paragraph 3 protects women and children against violence and insecurity, exploitation and moral, intellectual and physical abandonment,

The protection of women and child against violence, insecurity, exploitation and neglect, both mental and physical, is an obligation of the State and other public communities. This protection is provided by appropriate measures, State institutions and other public authorities.¹⁷⁹

Article 7 provides that,

Paragraph 1. Everyone has the right of access to sources of knowledge. The State guarantees children and adults access to education, to culture and vocational training.

Paragraph 6. Education is free in public institutions for the various levels of education.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁷⁷ Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁷⁸ World Intellectual Property Organization, Constitution de la République Centrafricaine, adopted 05 December 2004, promulgated 27 December 2004 <http://www.refworld.org/country,LEGAL,NATLEGBOD,,CAF,,3ae6b4dc10,0.html>, accessed 02 November 2013

¹⁷⁹ World Intellectual Property Organization, Constitution de la République Centrafricaine, adopted 05 December 2004, promulgated 27 December 2004 <http://www.refworld.org/country,LEGAL,NATLEGBOD,,CAF,,3ae6b4dc10,0.html>, accessed 02 November 2013

¹⁸⁰ World Intellectual Property Organization, Constitution de la République Centrafricaine, adopted 05 December 2004, promulgated 27 December 2004 <http://www.refworld.org/country,LEGAL,NATLEGBOD,,CAF,,3ae6b4dc10,0.html>, accessed 02 November 2013

In July 2013, in its national report submitted to the *UN Human Rights Council* for the review of its human rights record under the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, the *government of the Central African Republic* identified domestic legislation enacted to protect women's rights: Act No. 61/232 of 18 July 1961, on the Criminal Code; Act No. 06.32 of 27 December 2006, on protection of women against violence in the Central African Republic; Order No. 66.26 of 31 March 1966, on the advancement of girls; Act No. 06.005 of 20 June 2006, on reproductive health; and Order No. 66/16 of 22 February 1966 abolishing the practice of excision throughout the Central African Republic.¹⁸¹

The CAR is party to a number of international human rights treaties,¹⁸² including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which it ratified on 21 June 1991. In addition, in a national report submitted to the Human Rights Council in 2013 for the review of its human rights record under the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, the Central African Republican government indicated that although it is not yet a party to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the "ratification process [is] under way."¹⁸³

The *Act No.06.032 of 27 December 2006 on the Protection of Women against Violence in the Central African Republic* ("Loi n°06.032 du 27 décembre 2006 portant protection de la femme contre la violence en République centrafricaine") defines and punishes various forms of violence committed against women. The *2006 Act on the Protection of Women against Violence in the Central African Republic* covers "all acts of violence against women [...] in the public or private domain" (art.1): rape (art.2), paedophilia (art.3), incest (art.4), harassment (art.5), procuring (art.6), incitement of minors to vice (art.7), and pornography (art.8). The *Act* specifically covers the acts of: intentional assault and bodily harm, ill-treatment, public insult, female genital cutting (art. 9), as well as abuse in case of widowhood, confiscation of the widow's personal belongings, levirate and sororate marriages (art.10).¹⁸⁴

The *Act No.06.005 of 20 June 2006 on Reproductive Health* ("Loi n°06.005 du 20 juin 2006 Bangayassi relative à la santé de la reproduction") provides for equality of all individuals under the law and in dignity with regard to reproductive health, with no discrimination based on gender.¹⁸⁵

In November 2011 Regional Multilateral Institution *African Development Bank Group*, stated in its CAR Country Gender Profile that the 1997 Family Code was being

¹⁸¹ Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Seventeenth session, National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21: Central African Republic, page 6 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CFSession17.aspx>, accessed 31 October 2013

¹⁸² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (8 May 1981); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (8 May 1981); African Charter on Human and People's Rights (26 April 1986); Convention on the Rights of the Child (23 April 1992); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (3 July 2002); Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (8 May 1981); Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (20 June 2006).

¹⁸³ Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Seventeenth session, National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21: Central African Republic, page 4, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CFSession17.aspx>, accessed 31 October 2013

¹⁸⁴ Journal officiel de la République centrafricaine, édition de septembre 2007, Loi n° 06.032 du 27 décembre 2006 portant protection de la femme contre la violence en République centrafricaine, <http://www2.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/SERIAL/88131/100673/F2011730553/CAF-88131.pdf>, accessed 25 June 2013

¹⁸⁵ Journal officiel de la République centrafricaine, édition de septembre 2007, Loi n° 06.005 du 20 juin 2006 Bangayassi relative à la santé de la reproduction, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_172467.pdf, accessed 25 June 2013

reviewed in order to comply with international standards for the protection of the rights of women contained in international instruments that the CAR has ratified.¹⁸⁶

In November 2011 the *African Development Bank Group* stated that despite constitutional provisions for equality, in practice customary law prevails,

“The Constitution provides for equality between men and women; the Family Code is being reviewed, and several laws promote the rights of women. However, the effectiveness of this legal framework is limited since customary rules in fact prevail over positive law.”¹⁸⁷

In November 2011 the *African Development Bank Group*, stated that the scope of women’s rights laws was restricted by customary rules and that perpetrators of violence against women are "rarely" punished,

“In practice, the scope of the laws promoting the rights of women is subject to important limitations since customary rules coexist with positive law- they are largely unknown or ignored by the vast majority. Although the Act on the Protection of Women against Violence in the Central African Republic was adopted [in 2006], perpetrators are rarely denounced or sanctioned. Instead of triggering the suppression of these acts, it feels as an indirect incitement to sexual violence or to break rules – infringements going unpunished.”¹⁸⁸

The *African Development Bank Group* further stated that gender-based violence persists because victims fear reporting the abuse (under the pressure of the perpetrator, the family and the society at large) and that gender-based violence remains taboo. Only a few actions had been taken to prevent and address gender-based violence,

“Despite the Act on the Protection of Women against Violence in the Central African Republic, there are very few structures to receive and assist victims. After years of armed conflicts, a culture of violence is so deeply embedded that gender-based violence is viewed as normal. People only feel indifferent to it or blame it on the victims.”¹⁸⁹

4.1.2 Children

The rights of the child are protected under Articles 6 and 7 of the Constitution,

Article 6, paragraph 1 states,

¹⁸⁶ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁸⁷ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁸⁸ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁸⁹ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

Marriage and family is the natural and moral basis of the human community. They are placed under the protection of the state. The State and other public bodies have the collective duty to ensure the physical and moral health of the family through appropriate institutions.

Article 6, paragraph 2,

Natural children, legally recognized, have the same rights as legitimate children. The State and other public bodies have a duty to create preconditions and public institutions that guarantee the education of children.

Article 6, paragraph 4,

Parents have the natural right and the primary duty to raise and educate their children to develop physically, intellectually and morally. They are supported in this task by the State and other public bodies.

Article 6, paragraph 5,

Children born out of wedlock have the same rights to public assistance as legitimate children.

Article 6, paragraph 7,

The State and other public bodies have a duty to create preconditions and public institutions to ensure the education of children.

Article 7 provides that,

Paragraph 1. Everyone has the right of access to sources of knowledge. The State guarantees children and adults access to education, to culture and vocational training.

Paragraph 6. Education is free in public institutions for the various levels of education.¹⁹⁰

According to a 2005 *ICCPR periodic report*, the Act No.97.013 of 11 November 1997 establishing the Family Code (“Loi n°97.013 du 11 novembre 1997) provides that “No one can get married before reaching the age of 18,” however exemption on serious grounds can be granted by the “Procureur de la République”. The *ICCPR periodic report* documented that no marriage shall be entered into without consent of future spouses and that the consent is expressed during the solemnization of the marriage.¹⁹¹ [We were unable to source the original legal text during the timeframe of this research].

¹⁹⁰ World Intellectual Property Organization, Constitution de la République Centrafricaine, adopted 05 December 2004, promulgated 27 December 2004 <http://www.refworld.org/country/LEGAL,NATLEGBOD,,CAF,,3ae6b4dc10,0.html>, accessed 02 November 2013. Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

¹⁹¹ Nations Unies, Pacte international relatifs aux droits civils et politiques, 2^e rapport périodique, République centrafricaine, 3 June 2005, <http://www.google.fr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=loi%2097.013%20du%2011%20novembre%201997%20r%C3%A9publique%20centrafricaine&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CC0QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.unhchr.ch%2Ftbs%2Fdoc.nsf%2Fe121f32fbc58faaf>

In July 2013, in its national report submitted to the *UN Human Rights Council* for the review of its human rights record under the Universal Periodic Review mechanism, the *government of the Central African Republic* identified domestic legislation enacted to protect children including: the Labour Code, which the government reported to contain various provisions to protect children from abuses likely to jeopardize their normal development and from the worst forms of child labour; the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure which the government reported to contain extensive provisions on the protection of children; the recognition of the situation of Central African children in Act No. 97.013 of 11 November 1997; Act No. 63.406 of 6 May 1963, establishing the nationality of children born to a Central African mother where the parents have not contracted a lawful civil Marriage; and Act No. 64.23 of 5 November 1964 on the legal declaration of paternity.¹⁹²

At the international level, the *government of the Central African Republic* ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 23 April 1992.¹⁹³ Under article 4 of the CRC, the government is obliged to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention.¹⁹⁴ It has also ratified the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)¹⁹⁵ on 28 June 2000.¹⁹⁶

4.2 Overview of current issues regarding women and children

4.2.1 Children: Access to school

In August 2013 *IRIN* stated that due to the current security situation "650,000 or more children are unable to go to school."¹⁹⁷

In April 2013 French weekly news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that most schools were still closed more than a month after the Seleka forces seized power in the CAR. Many had been looted. In Bangui, apart from the University all public and private schools were closed and some hosted new Seleka headquarters (i.e. the High schools of Boganda, Marie-Jeanne Caron, Miskine, Gobongo, Les Rapides and

[c1256a2a0027ba24%2F010bb218ed3c9af2c12570df002dc65f%2F%24FILE%2FG0543993.DOC&ei=mrHJUdO2GKWx0QX42YCYBQ&usq=AFQjCNEKYomgaQs_JlpHPx50pp5zyQA-Jq](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CFSession17.aspx), accessed 25 June 2013

¹⁹² Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Seventeenth session, National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21: Central African Republic, 23 July 2013, page 7 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CFSession17.aspx>, accessed 04 November 2013

¹⁹³ United Nations Treaty Collection, Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990, Ratification Status, http://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtmsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en, accessed 06 November 2013

¹⁹⁴ United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990 <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/telex/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=3ae6b38f0&skip=0&query=Convention%20on%20the%20Rights%20of%20the%20Child>, accessed 06 November 2013

¹⁹⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, adopted 17 June 1999, entered into force 19 November 2000, http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182, accessed 06 November 2013

¹⁹⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) Ratifications for Central African Republic, 2013, http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11200:0::NO:11200:P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103381, accessed 06 November 2013

¹⁹⁷ IRIN, Central African Republic - a crisis in numbers, 16 August 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98582/central-african-republic-a-crisis-in-numbers>, accessed 20 August 2013

several Primary schools in the capital). A school Principal in Bangui stated that cases of rape had been reported and that the situation was too dangerous to ask pupils to come back. According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, schools had been looted outside Bangui. In Kaga Bandoro (centre north of the CAR), schools had been shut down for 5 months. A teacher in Bambari (centre east) reported that their last salaries had not been paid, and a 15-year-old school girl declared that they were left with no school furniture after the Seleka looted the area.¹⁹⁸

In October 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that several children and young people in Lambi (located 60 km from Boali in the south west) had no birth certificate. Many people from this region lacked a national identity card as well as other administrative papers since they did not have a birth certificate. According to a local representative, in order to declare the birth of a child, parents would need to walk more than 60 km – there were often no roads – to get to Boali town hall (“mairie”). The administrative procedures were then often slow. RJDH reported that without a birth certificate, it was later very complicated for children to access school.¹⁹⁹

In October 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that two children aged 12 and 13 lodged a complaint with Ndolobo (near Mbaiki in the south) military police against their father because they had no birth certificate and had never been to school. 3 children out of 5 in Ndolobo were reported not to go to school due to a lack of birth certificate.²⁰⁰

In September 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that orphans in Bouar (west) were generally not enrolled in schools and did not have a birth certificate.²⁰¹

4.2.2 The recruitment and use of children in rebel armies

In August 2013 *IRIN* reported that 3,500 children had been recruited into armed groups.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Le Nouvel Observateur, Centrafrique: Les écoles toujours fermées, 29 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/education/20130429.AFP1344/centrafrique-les-ecoles-toujours-fermees.html>, accessed 17 June 2013

¹⁹⁹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Boali : Des enfants ne sont pas déclarés à la naissance, 18 October 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/10/18/boali-des-enfants-ne-sont-pas-declares-a-la-naissance/>, accessed 24 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁰⁰ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaiki : Des enfants poursuivent leurs parents pour non déclaration de naissance, 6 October 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/10/06/mbaiki-des-enfants-poursuivent-leurs-parents-pour-non-declaration-de-naissance/>, accessed 24 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁰¹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bouar : Des orphelins en difficulté de scolarisation, 19 September 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/513>, accessed 24 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁰² IRIN, Central African Republic - a crisis in numbers, 16 August 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98582/central-african-republic-a-crisis-in-numbers>, accessed 20 August 2013

In October 2013, the *UN Security Council* adopted Resolution 2121 [on the situation in Central African Republic] in which it demanded that armed groups stop the recruitment of children and release all currently held,

"[...] all armed groups, in particular Seleka elements prevent the recruitment and use of children, further demands that all parties protect and consider as victims those children who have been released or otherwise separated from armed forces and armed groups, and emphasizes the need to pay particular attention to the protection, release and reintegration of all children associated with armed groups."²⁰³

In September 2013, *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported on confirmed allegations on the recruitment of children by the Seleka,

"The mission conducted interviews with children formerly associated with the Séléka coalition also confirmed allegations on the recruitment of children by the coalition between 10 December 2012 and 23 March 2013, in particular by the *Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix*, in breach of their commitment to the action plan²⁰⁴ signed with the United Nations in November 2011. The recruitment of children was reported during the progression of Séléka forces to Kaga-Bandoro, Sibut and Damara, from where the attack on Bangui was launched. Some of the children recruited were reported to be from Chad and the Sudan."²⁰⁵

In September 2013, *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported on the use of children as human shields by the Séléka,

The mission also received reliable information that the Séléka had used recruited children as human shields, more particularly during the battle opposing them in Damara to the South African contingent in their progression to take Bangui, on 23 and 24 March 2013.²⁰⁶

In August 2013, international child rights organisation *Save the Children* estimated that more than 100,000 displaced children were at risk of sexual abuse, disease, and recruitment into armed groups.²⁰⁷

In May 2013, the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that the Seleka forces had recruited children as soldiers, with evidence of children being re-recruited after being liberated by the U.N. from other armed groups,

²⁰³ UN Security Council, Resolution 2121 (2013) Central African Republic, adopted 10 October 2013, para. 15 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2121%282013%29, accessed 01 November 2013

²⁰⁴ Framework established by the Security Council in its resolution 1612 (2005) to oversee the separation of children associated with armed groups

²⁰⁵ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013 para. 43 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁰⁶ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 44 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁰⁷ Save the Children, Children in the Central African Republic exposed to abuse, disease and recruitment into armed groups, 13 August 2013, <http://www.savethechildren.net/article/children-central-african-republic-exposed-abuse-disease-and-recruitment-armed-groups>, accessed 04 November 2013

"In January and February 2013, child protection professionals documented 27 cases of recruitment and use of children by elements of the Seleka alliance, predominantly in the prefectures of Ouham, Ombella-Mpoko and Bamingui-Bangoran. Government forces have also allegedly recruited and used children, and have committed other grave violations against children, including sexual violence. Meanwhile, youth groups in the capital of Bangui, who were encouraged by the former government to defend the city, were given light weapons and set up roadblocks throughout the capital. Children were observed among the group.

[...] Since Seleka's offensive on Bangui, new accounts have been documented of its recruitment of children in the capital. There is also evidence of Seleka's re-recruitment of children previously separated by the United Nations from different armed groups, including 19 children formerly associated with CPJP. Seleka has allegedly also recruited young people as informants who identify places to pillage.²⁰⁸

In May 2013, the *UN Secretary-General* also reported 64 children formerly associated with armed groups were paraded by police and held as "rebels" until the UN negotiated their release,

"On 24 December 2012, the Central African National Police broke into a reception centre in Bangui and detained 64 children formerly associated with CPJP and UFDR, alleging that they were rebels. The children were paraded through Bangui market and questioned by the national police. Following high-level advocacy by the United Nations, they were eventually released. Owing to security constraints, the country task force was unable to verify the presence of children in the *Mouvement des libérateurs centrafricains pour la justice* in Birao (Vakaga prefecture) and in the *Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain* in Kabo (Nana Grébizi prefecture).²⁰⁹

In May 2013 the *UN Secretary-General* reported the continued recruitment and use of children in armed groups, killing of children, and sexual violence against children by armed groups,

"...the United Nations received alarming reports continuing into 2013 of recruitment and use of children by armed groups and pro-Government militias, killing of children associated with those groups in the course of military operations and sexual violence against children by armed groups."²¹⁰

In May 2013 the *UN Secretary-General* reported 41 cases of recruitment of children,

"During the reporting period, the country task force documented 41 cases of recruitment of children, of which 23 occurred in Haut-Mbomou and Mbomou prefectures, 1 of which 23 occurred in Haut-Mbomou and Mbomou

²⁰⁸ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

²⁰⁹ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 36

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Children%20and%20armed%20conflict.pdf>, accessed 02 November 2013

²¹⁰ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 35

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Children%20and%20armed%20conflict.pdf>, accessed 02 November 2013

prefectures, 14 in Haute-Kotto prefecture, 2 in Nana Grébizi prefecture and 2 in Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture."²¹¹

In May 2013 the *UN Secretary-General* reported that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) appeared to be responsible for most of the cases, closely followed by the Séléka coalition.²¹²

In May 2013, the UN Secretary-General reported that the CPJP had failed to honour its commitment under the November 2011 Action Plan on Child Soldiers,

During the reporting period, CPJP failed to honour its commitment to implement the action plan to end the recruitment and use of children signed by its leadership in November 2011. The splintering of CPJP and a lack of internal cohesion complicated implementation. Children continued to be recruited into the ranks of CPJP and commanders opposed the release of children. During a verification mission by the United Nations in November 2012, 30 children who had been identified by the CPJP leadership for release were prevented from leaving the group.²¹³

In May 2013, the *UN Secretary-General* reported on the release of children from the ranks of UFDR,

Although the release of children from the ranks of UFDR had begun in 2012, further progress was limited. A first commitment to release all children remaining in its ranks had been signed by UFDR with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 2007. In November 2011, UFDR reiterated that commitment and allowed the United Nations to verify the presence of children remaining in its ranks. A formal action plan has yet to be signed. Difficulties in gaining access to CPJP and UFDR in remote areas of Vakaga and Haute-Kotto prefectures also hindered the verification and separation of children."²¹⁴

In May 2013, the *UN Secretary-General* reported on the release of children from the ranks of CPJP,

"During the reporting period, 345 children (222 boys and 123 girls) were separated from CPJP (157) in Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto and Vakaga prefectures; UFDR (170) in Haute-Kotto and Bamingui-Bangoran prefectures; and escaped from LRA (18) in Haut-Mbomou and Mbomou prefectures. In addition, the United Nations estimates that up to 35 children associated with FPR were repatriated to Chad following the dismantling of that armed group in September 2012."²¹⁵

²¹¹ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para. 36 <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Children%20and%20armed%20conflict.pdf>, accessed 02 November 2013

²¹² UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para. 36 <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Children%20and%20armed%20conflict.pdf>, accessed 02 November 2013

²¹³ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 41 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

²¹⁴ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 43 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

²¹⁵ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para 44 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported a Seleka member confirming the presence of child soldiers in attacks,

"Human Rights Watch met with Jean-Michel Bangui, the executive secretary of Colonel Bashir Muhammad, who is the highest-ranking member of the Séléka in Bouca. Bangui candidly told Human Rights Watch, regarding Yangoumara and Gbi-Gbi: "We burned those villages. That was us, the Seleka." He claimed that certain Seleka soldiers were "children" and that they were angry after a villager shot their captain, so they acted in revenge. He said: These children decided to do this. I do not know which one. No order was given. But the children got upset because the captain was shot, they were nervous so they shot. Human Rights Watch interviewed Bangui in the presence of Seleka troops, who appeared to be very young and possibly child soldiers in the age range of 13-15."²¹⁶

In its *Trafficking in Persons Report 2013*, the *USDOS* reported that the Lord's Resistance Army continued to abduct and enslave children from bordering countries,

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Ugandan rebel group that operates in eastern regions of the CAR, continued to abduct and enslave South Sudanese, Congolese, Central African, and Ugandan children for use as cooks, porters, concubines, and combatants. The LRA also forced these children to commit atrocities such as looting and burning villages, killing village residents, and abducting other children. Some of these children were also taken back and forth across borders into South Sudan or the DRC."²¹⁷

In May 2013, the *UN Secretary-General* reported 10 cases of the killing of children,

"During the reporting period, the country task force documented 10 cases of killing of children, as opposed to 88 in 2011. This decrease appeared to be linked to the cessation of hostilities between CPJP and UFDR in 2012. During armed confrontations on 23 January 2012 between the Central African and Chadian armed forces on the one hand, and the *Front patriotique pour le redressement* (FPR) on the other, four children were killed. Overall, the total number of child casualties in 2012 is estimated to be higher, given that the country task force was unable to verify incidents that occurred during the crisis of December 2012 owing to security constraints."²¹⁸

In January 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* stated that a growing number of children were being recruited by both rebel armies and pro-government militias. According to UNICEF about 2,500 children – both girls and boys – were associated with armed groups, including self-defence groups, before conflict erupted in December 2012. *AFP* reported that children, in particular those who had been separated from their parents,

²¹⁶ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013 <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²¹⁷ USDOS - US Department of State: *Trafficking in Persons Report 2013: Central African Republic, 2013* <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>, accessed 04 November 2013

²¹⁸ UN Secretary-General, *Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General*, 15 May 2013, para 37 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

were forced to fight or to transport supplies, and were at risk of being sexually abused. According to *Le Monde*, the UNICEF Representative for CAR stated that,

“A number of rebel groups and various pro-government militias have become more active in recent weeks in the capital city of Bangui and across the country. Reliable sources have informed us that children are newly being recruited among their ranks.”²¹⁹

Le Monde stated that according to UNICEF over 300,000 children have been affected by violence in the CAR and were at risk of being recruited as soldiers.²²⁰

In January 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that underprivileged children aged 3 to 18 were particularly vulnerable. Boys were forced to fight, to transport military supplies or to become messengers. Girls were generally recruited for cooking or forced into sexual slavery. *Afrik.com* reported that street children and children who had lost their parents in the conflict were specific targets for militias. Most of the UNICEF staff who had succeeded in returning over 1,000 children to civilian life since 2007 had been compelled to leave the CAR.²²¹

In January 2013, the office of the *UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* reported that armed groups that are part of an alliance of rebel groups known as ‘Séléka’, including the CPJP and the UFDR, have been re-recruiting children to their ranks.²²² According to the *UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* the UFDR had previously committed to releasing children in its ranks,

"For its part, the UFDR had committed to releasing children in its ranks to the United Nations in 2007 and 2011."²²³

In January 2013, the *UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* stated that this was a further breach of the CPJP Action Plan, when the armed group refused to release two girls in their ranks in an incident in Aigbando on 7 December 2012.²²⁴

In January 2013 the *UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* expressed disappointment at the persistent recurrence of grave violations against children in the Central African Republic,

²¹⁹ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : Toujours plus d'enfants soldats dans les milices rebelles et gouvernementales, 4 January 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/04/centrafrique-toujours-plus-d-enfants-soldats-dans-les-milices-rebelles-et-gouvernementales_1812987_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

²²⁰ *Le Monde*, Centrafrique : Toujours plus d'enfants soldats dans les milices rebelles et gouvernementales, 4 January 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/01/04/centrafrique-toujours-plus-d-enfants-soldats-dans-les-milices-rebelles-et-gouvernementales_1812987_3212.html, accessed 16 June 2013

²²¹ *Afrik.com*, Crise en Centrafrique : Les enfants soldats au cœur du conflit, 8 January 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/crise-en-centrafrique-les-enfants-soldats-au-coeur-du-conflit>, accessed 17 June 2013

²²² UN News Service, UN official disappointed by new reports of child soldiers in Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43972#.UnTVt1M5P3A>, accessed 02 November 2013

²²³ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative Zerrougui warns of re-recruitment of children in the Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/car0113/>, accessed 06 November 2013

²²⁴ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative Zerrougui warns of re-recruitment of children in the Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/car0113/>, accessed 02 November 2013

"The same actors have been violating child rights with impunity for too long. We will continue to monitor the situation and if no progress is made, we will engage the Security Council on this matter."²²⁵

In January 2013 the *UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* expressed concern regarding the *government of the Central African Republic's* commitment to protect children.²²⁶ In January 2013, the *UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* reported an incident on 24 December 2012 involving the detention of children,

...elements of the Central African security forces broke into a reception centre for children in the capital, Bangui, and detained 64 former child soldiers alleging that they were "rebels". The children were subsequently released and placed in a transit centre; without protection, their security continues to be in jeopardy.²²⁷

In its country report covering events in 2012, *USDOS* reported the continued use of children by armed forces,

"numerous human rights observers had reported that the *Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement* (UFDR), the *Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix* (CPJP), and the now-disbanded *People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy* (APRD) agreed to stop recruiting child soldiers as a result of disarmament, demobilization, and reinsertion activities, but in some areas children were still observed as lookouts or porters and, in certain cases, were engaged as combatants."²²⁸

In its country report covering events in 2012, the *USDOS* reported that some armed groups included soldiers as young as 12.²²⁹

In November 2011 the *Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix* (CPJP) signed an Action Plan on Child Soldiers, in line with Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005).²³⁰ In November 2011, the *UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* reported that the CPJP had committed to the UN demobilization of child soldiers in its ranks,

"The fact that they have already drawn up lists" of child soldiers to be released is a sign that the CPJP is prepared to carry out its obligations."²³¹

²²⁵ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative Zerrougui warns of re-recruitment of children in the Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/car0113/>, accessed 02 November 2013

²²⁶ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative Zerrougui warns of re-recruitment of children in the Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/car0113/>, accessed 02 November 2013

²²⁷ Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative Zerrougui warns of re-recruitment of children in the Central African Republic, 21 January 2013, <http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/car0113/>, accessed 02 November 2013

²²⁸ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²²⁹ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²³⁰ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) [on children in armed conflict], 26 July 2005, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/43f308d6c.html>, accessed 02 November 2013

²³¹ UN News Centre, UN envoy sees momentum on releasing child soldiers in Central African Republic, 21 November 2011, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40471&Cr=central+african+republic&Cr1=#.UnoyRvnmwSo>, accessed 06

4.2.2.1 CPJP breach of the 2011 UN action plan to end the recruitment of children for military purposes

In June 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) handed about 30 child soldiers to UNICEF nearby Ndele (north east). On 21 November 2011, U.N. Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Radhika Coomaraswamy signed an action plan aimed at liberating child soldiers.²³²

4.2.3 Female genital mutilation/cutting

In *The State of the World's Children 2011: Adolescence – An Age of Opportunity*, UNICEF reported that 26% of women 15–49 years old had been subjected to FGM between 1997 and 2009. On daughters, UNICEF reported that 7% of women 15–49 years old had at least one mutilated/cut daughter between 1997 and 2008.²³³

4.2.4 Rape and other forms of sexual violence

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported on the prevalence of sexual violence against women in the Central African Republic.²³⁴ Although unable to estimate or confirm the total number of women and girls who were raped by Seleka members, *Human Rights Watch* reported that it had received credible reports of 37 cases of rapes allegedly perpetrated by Seleka elements in Bangui, Sibut, and Damara.²³⁵ It also reported credible cases of multiple rapes in Ouandago between Kaga-Bandoro and Batangafo.²³⁶ It identified that most women were raped by Seleka armed elements who forced them to undress at night in the street and threatened them at gunpoint.²³⁷ Victims were not able to report the crimes or seek medical assistance following the incidents due to insecurity in Bangui.²³⁸

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported excerpts from interviews with victims of sexual violence. One woman who was raped together with her sister gave details of her experience,

November 2013

²³² Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, 14 & 18 June 2012, Ndélé : Des enfants soldats libérés par la CPJP & Ndélé : Environ 30 enfants associés à la CPJP ont été libérés, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/161> & <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/168>, accessed 24 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²³³ UNICEF, *La situation des enfants dans le monde, L'adolescence, l'âge de tous les possibles*, February 2011, http://www.unicef.org/french/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_FR_02092011.pdf, accessed 27 June 2013

In English : http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/SOWC_2011_Main_Report_EN_02242011.pdf

²³⁴ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²³⁵ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²³⁶ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²³⁷ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²³⁸ Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

"The day after they captured Bangui, I was in my house, where I live with my younger sister ... when many Seleka fighters entered the neighborhood. I am 33 years old and my sister is 23. She was 8 months pregnant when they raped us on March 25. They were shooting in the air in front of our house. Two armed men entered the house, threatened us, and forced us to get undressed and lay down on the ground....They both raped us, one after the other. They were shouting bad words in Sango and in Arabic. One of them was shouting the Arabic word charmouta (prostitute in Arabic) while raping me. Then they left the house. Our neighbor took us to the community hospital, where my sister lost her baby the day after."²³⁹

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that the parents of one rape survivor told that their daughter, age 14, was raped by Seleka forces after they looted the family's home,

"While Séléka forces held the parents at gunpoint, one of the Séléka members took the daughter outside on the veranda and raped her. The parents could hear her crying. When finished, the Seleka members told the parents, "We have done what we came to do."²⁴⁰

In its 2013 annual report on human rights *Amnesty International* reported that other parties in the CAR have been reported to have committed sexual violence against women, such as the Lord's Resistance Army²⁴¹, and Chadian government soldiers who had participated in the January operation against the FPR, the latter of which are reported to have raped more than a dozen women in the northern town of Ndele.²⁴²

In September 2013, on the issue of sexual violence involving children, the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported that,

"The majority of counterparts interviewed reported cases of sexual violence against children and the use of girls as sexual slaves. The mission itself received isolated information on alleged cases of sexual slavery."²⁴³

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported sexual violence committed by the Séléka,

"Information collected from protection actors suggests that sexual violence was committed by the Séléka in the country, including against children, from 10 December 2012 to 23 March 2013. It was, however, difficult for the mission

²³⁹ Human Rights Watch interview with rape survivor, Bangui, 22 April 2013. as quoted on page 62 in Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch interview with mother of rape survivor, Bangui, April 22, 2013, as quoted on page 63 in Human Rights Watch "I Can Still Smell the Dead" The Forgotten Human Rights Crisis in Central African Republic, 18 September 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/09/18/i-can-still-smell-dead-0>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁴¹ Amnesty International, Annual Report 2013: The State of the World's Human Rights, 2013, page 56 http://files.amnesty.org/air13/AmnestyInternational_AnnualReport2013_complete_en.pdf, accessed 31 October 2013,

²⁴² Amnesty International, Annual Report 2013: The State of the World's Human Rights, 2013, page 57 http://files.amnesty.org/air13/AmnestyInternational_AnnualReport2013_complete_en.pdf, accessed 31 October 2013,

²⁴³ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic, Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 42 (a) <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

to obtain testimonies from victims of sexual and gender-based violence or witnesses mainly because of their fear of stigmatization."²⁴⁴

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported on the geographical distribution of registered rape cases, the city of Bangui registering the largest number of cases,

The city of Bangui registered the largest number of rape cases, as many victims left the provinces for the capital, where they reported the cases allegedly committed by the Séléka. The mission received credible and corroborated information of hundreds of cases of rape, including at least 250 registered in Bangui alone between January and June 2013, of which 140 were perpetrated by armed men reportedly belonging to the Séléka. One credible non-governmental organization documented 106 cases of rape committed by the Séléka in Bangui from December 2012 to April 2013. Dozens of cases committed between 10 December 2012 and March 2013 were reported to the mission in Basse Kotto and Haute Kotto prefectures, and during field visits to Damara, Sibut and Kaga-Bandoro.²⁴⁵

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported accounts of sexual violence committed by the Séléka after they seized power in March 2013,

The mission had the opportunity to meet with two medical sources in Bangui. One of them had registered 79 cases of rape mainly by the Séléka after 24 March 2013, including children between 5 and 8 years of age. Around 60 per cent of victims were raped in Bangui and 40 per cent around the village of Damara and on the axis Damara-Boali. According to another medical source in Bangui, 38 women treated in the health centre, including three children, had allegedly been raped by members of the Séléka between February and the beginning of July 2013.

In Bangui alone, the mission received 29 testimonies and reports of rape by the Séléka committed in eight different neighbourhoods. Different sources reported that, between 13 and 16 April 2013, several women, including girls aged between 12 and 14 years, were raped in the neighbourhood of Boy-Rabe known to be pro-Bozizé. One source referred to the alleged rape of seven women, while another reported a case of rape of four women, on 14 April, and of a 12-year old girl, on 15 April. The mission interviewed a woman raped in the same neighbourhood on 17 April. It also received information on cases of rape during its field visits to the villages of Mbaïki, Damara, Kaga-Bandoro and Sibut.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 39 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁴⁵ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 41 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁴⁶ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 66 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* highlighted that the number of cases reported were not an accurate representation of actual cases of sexual violence, identifying fear of retaliation or stigmatization as factors that prevented victims from reporting,

"The mission was aware that the cases reported represented only a fraction of actual cases of sexual violence, since many victims do not report these crimes for fear of retaliation or stigmatization. Many victims of sexual or gender-based violence who consequently sought medical treatment required surgery. Several of them became pregnant, suffered a miscarriage or contracted sexually-transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, as a result of sexual violence."²⁴⁷

In October 2013 the *UN Security Council* urged efforts towards the prevention of sexual violence, and the investigation of such cases, and the facilitation of services to victims of sexual violence,

"[The Security Council] Calls upon all parties to armed conflict in the CAR, including Seleka elements to issue clear orders against sexual violence, and further calls upon those parties to make and implement specific commitments on timely investigation of alleged abuses in order to hold perpetrators accountable, in line with its resolution 1960 (2010), and to facilitate immediate access for victims of sexual violence to available services."²⁴⁸

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported an increase of rape and sexual violence in the CAR since the Seleka coup,

"The prevalent state of lawlessness has had a devastating impact on women and girls in the Central African Republic. There have been ongoing and continuous reports of sexual violence, including rape, gang rape and sexual slavery.

[...] The current situation marks a further deterioration since the visit to the Central African Republic of my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict in December 2012, just before the Seleka offensive was launched."²⁴⁹

In April 2013 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that women were fleeing Boy Rabe neighborhood in the 4th district of Bangui because Seleka rebels were committing rape and looting. According to a local witness, girls aged 12 to 14 had been raped.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 67 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁴⁸ UN Security Council, Resolution 2121 (2013) Central African Republic, adopted 10 October 2013, para.16 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2121%282013%29, accessed 01 November 2013

²⁴⁹ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

²⁵⁰ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : Des femmes fuient le quartier Boy-Rabe à cause de la violence sexuelle, 16 April 2013, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2013/04/16/bangui-des-femmes-fuient-le-quartier-boy-rabe-a-cause-de-la-violence-sexuelle>, accessed 15 June 2013

In January 2013 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that according to medical sources there was an increase of child rape in Obo (south east). *RJDH* reported the cases of rape on 7- and 9-years-olds.²⁵¹

In its 2012 report on human rights in Central African Republic, *USDOS* reported that the government has not enforced the law effectively.²⁵² Domestic law prohibits rape, although it does not specifically prohibit spousal rape. *USDOS* outlined that rape is punishable by imprisonment with hard labor, but the law does not specify a minimum sentence. Police sometimes arrested men on charges of rape, although statistics on the number of prosecutions and convictions during the year were not available. *USDOS* identified fear of social stigma and retaliation as factors that inhibit many families from reporting cases.²⁵³

In May 2013 the *UN Secretary-General* reported that incidents of sexual violence and lack of government action remained a concern throughout 2012,

"The country task force verified 22 cases, of which 13 were perpetrated by members of FPR, who raped several girls between 9 and 17 years of age in the villages of Damara and Ngoukpe (Ombella-Mpoko prefecture). The country task force also received reports of rape of girls in Bambari, Bria, Ndele and Bangui by the Séléka coalition in December 2012. Between 2 and 5 February 2012, members of the Chadian army in Ndele raped three 15-year-old girls and a 17-year-old girl during their return to Chad after providing support to the offensive by the Central African armed forces against FPR. Although the cases were reported to the Governments of the Central African Republic and Chad, no action has been taken to date."²⁵⁴

In September 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* together with local NGO *Integrated Community Development International* reported that 7 women who had been raped by unidentified armed men in the village of Malenguinza (a gold mining area located 67 km from Bangui) had not been provided any psychological or medical assistance. According to a local representative,

"They are being stigmatised and discriminated by local population. Some of them face threats of divorce because their husband worry that they have been infected."²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Obo : Deux cas de viol sur des mineurs enregistrés en moins d'une semaine, 22 January 2013, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/523>, accessed 24 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁵² *USDOS* - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/i/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁵³ *USDOS* - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/i/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁵⁴ UN Secretary-General, Children and Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General, 15 May 2013, para. 38 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/311/67/PDF/N1331167.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 02 November 2013

²⁵⁵ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, 19 September 2012, Boali : Des femmes victimes de viol abandonnées à elles-mêmes, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/442>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

According to *RJDH*, 3 women asked to be HIV tested but no resources were available. The town of Boali lacks humanitarian structures in order to provide help to women victims of rape or sexual violence.²⁵⁶

In December 2012, following an eight-day visit to the Central African Republic, the *UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict* reported that all armed groups were guilty of committing violence against women and children,

"Asked whether all armed groups in the country were guilty of abusing women and children...[-]...she said that, by all accounts, almost all the armed groups — six that had signed the peace agreement so far — had committed sexual violence. Regrettably, the Government lacked access to the rest of the country, which made it difficult to determine a concrete number of victims. That problem was compounded by the “culture of silence”, she added, expressing hope, however, that following her extensive discussions with the Government and all stakeholders, more and more people would be willing to talk.”²⁵⁷

In November 2011 Regional Multilateral Institution *African Development Bank Group*, stated in its CAR Country Gender Profile that women are vulnerable to sexual harassment at school, work and in jail, customary practices allow the rape of widows and in some cases young girls and that slavery exists in the form of domestic servitude and street vending,

“Many women suffer from gender-based violence outside their home. Rape as a weapon of war comes in the first place during periods of armed conflict. The risk of contracting HIV-AIDS compounds the problems women already face: sexual violence and the resulting physical and psychological trauma. Women are victims of sexual harassment at work, in school or in jail – up to and including rape. Young women looking for a job are often offered a position in return for sexual services.

Customary practices such as levirate marriage, ‘purification of the widow’ (a widow is forced to have sexual intercourse with a relative of her late husband before being allowed to ‘have a new sexual life’), early marriage and ‘duty of hospitality’ (when a distinguished visitor including a representative of another locality visits, the traditional chief selects a young girl from the community to have sexual intercourse with the visitor – the young girl cannot refuse the chief) are various sexual forms of gender-based violence.

Lastly, there are new forms of slavery such as domestic servants and children street vendors.”²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, 19 September 2012, Boali : Des femmes victimes de viol abandonnées à elles-mêmes, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/442>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁵⁷ United Nations, Press Conference by the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on the situation in the Central African Republic, 20 December 2012, http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs//2012/121220_Bangura.doc.htm, accessed 06 November 2013

²⁵⁸ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

4.2.5 Domestic violence

In November 2011 Regional Multilateral Institution *African Development Bank Group*, described domestic violence on the basis of a Multiple Indicators Cluster's survey (MICS3) published by the CAR Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation ("Ministère de l'Économie, du Plan et de la Coopération international") in November 2007. They stated that,

"About one woman out of five (18%) affirmed to have experienced some form of physical violence at least once during the last 12 months before the survey; 12% of women had been victims of sexual violence, 7% had been forced by their husband/ partner to have sexual intercourse, 3% had been forced to perform other sexual acts.

At a national level, 4 women out of 5 (81%) have experienced some form of psychological violence. The main reasons are: husband's anger if the wife talked to other men (60%); husband insisting to know where the wife is at all time (56%), lack of trust on money issues (41%), accusations of adultery (38%), and restrictions to meet girl-friends."²⁵⁹

In its 2012 country report on human rights, *USDOS* reported that domestic violence was common and reporting of incidents was low,

Although the law does not specifically mention spousal abuse, it prohibits violence against any person and provides for penalties of up to 10 years in prison. Domestic violence against women, including wife beating, was common; 25 percent of women surveyed in an international NGO study had experienced violence committed by their partner in 2009. Spousal abuse was considered a civil matter unless the injury was severe. According to the AFJC, victims of domestic abuse seldom reported incidents to authorities. When incidents were addressed, it was done so within the family or local community.²⁶⁰

In its 2012 country report on human rights, *USDOS* identified that some women tolerated domestic violence to retain financial security,

Some women reportedly tolerated abuse to retain financial security for themselves and their children.²⁶¹

4.2.6 Witchcraft accusations

In September 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)*

²⁵⁹ Groupe de la Banque Africaine de Développement, Profil Genre de la République centrafricaine, November 2011, <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/PGP%20RCA%20%C3%A9dit%C3%A9%20%282%29.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2013

²⁶⁰ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dlid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁶¹ USDOS - State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dlid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

reported that 2 women suspected of witchcraft had been killed, burned and buried in a mass grave in the village of Kapou (60 km from Bangui). International NGO Danish Refugee Council reported the incident to the military police who started an investigation.²⁶²

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that the regional court of Bambari (centre) opened a criminal investigation after young people murdered a 60 year old man accused of witchcraft in Grimari. The victim was accused of having bewitched a young girl he had been requested to heal. After being sent to custody, he had got a temporary jail release due to his age, but young people stoned him and burned him alive claiming they wanted justice to be done.²⁶³

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported on the murder of the 60 year old man accused of witchcraft in Grimari. People demonstrated against the man by burning houses and destroying manioc and banana crops and a fish pond belonging to the victim. One of the demonstrators reported to the press,

“We decided to act because legal proceedings often come to nothing, but we are ready to face justice.”²⁶⁴

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that a 60 year old widow accused of witchcraft was held in custody in the military police station of Mbaiki (south). She was accused of being “at the core of all problems of the people in Less – development of the youth, lack of economy, numerous cases of bewitchment” because she owned a silver coin that she believed to heal people.²⁶⁵

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that a 60 year old woman who was accused of witchcraft had been physically assaulted in Mbaiki (South). She was later abandoned by her family and eventually took refuge in a Catholic charity and with the help of the Danish Refugee Council.²⁶⁶

²⁶² Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaiki : Deux présumées sorcières tuées et brûlées, 21 September 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/09/21/mbaiki-deux-presumees-sorcieres-tuees-et-brulees>, accessed 18 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶³ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Grimari : Ouverture d'une enquête sur l'assassinat d'un présumé sorcier, 27 August 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/401>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶⁴ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Grimari : Un homme accusé de sorcellerie lapidé et brûlé vif, 15 August 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/08/15/grimari-un-homme-accuse-de-sorcellerie-lapide-et-brule-vif>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶⁵ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaiki : Une veuve présumée sorcière en garde-à-vue à la gendarmerie, 26 July 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/07/26/mbaiki-une-veuve-presumee-sorcier-en-garde-a-vue-a-la-gendarmerie>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶⁶ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaiki : Une femme victime de justice populaire pour sorcellerie, 11 July 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/07/11/mbaiki-une-femme-victime->

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 3 village chiefs had been arrested and held in custody by the military police after the 60 year old woman accused of witchcraft in Mbaïki had succumbed to her injuries. The complaint was lodged by a humanitarian organisation [“Observatoire des droits de l’homme de la préfecture de la Lobaye”²⁶⁷]. The village chiefs had been arrested on the grounds that “popular justice” had been done in their villages, and in order to get them to denounce the real perpetrators.²⁶⁸

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 2 co-wives had been victims of popular justice in the village of Boukoko in Mbaïki after being accused of having caused their husband’s death in a road accident.²⁶⁹

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that a 60 year old man accused of witchcraft confirmed the allegations against him to military police officers in Kabo. He was accused of bewitching a 26 year old convict. The latter had been sentenced to jail for rape on a minor but his family claimed he had been bewitched.²⁷⁰

In October 2012, *UNHCR* held training sessions on human and women’s rights to address violence against persons accused of witchcraft in Batangafo, Kabo, Bossangoa and Bouca (Ouham), Paoua, Bocaranga and Bozoum (Ouham-Pende) in the Central African Republic.²⁷¹

In October 2012, *UNCHR* reported on the scale of the issue of witchcraft accusations in Central African Republic,

"Hundreds of people - mostly women - in the Central African Republic are accused every year of practicing witchcraft. “Witches” are often accused of causing a wide range of misfortunes such as infected toes, collapsed granary roofs, and even bad weather. Witchcraft is included as a crime in the country’s penal code (even punishable by execution), which is rarely contested given

de-justice-populaire-pour-sorcellerie, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶⁷ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaïki :Mobilisation réclamée pour bannir la justice populaire, 19 July 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/294>, accessed 17 July 2013

²⁶⁸ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaïki : Des chefs de villages arrêtés pour justice populaire de leurs administrés, 23 July 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/07/23/mbaiki-des-chefs-de-villages-arretes-pour-justice-populaire-de-leurs-administres>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁶⁹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaïki : Deux coépouses victimes de justice populaire, 19 July 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/291>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁷⁰ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Kabo : Accusé de pratique de sorcellerie, il confirme, 12 July 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/07/12/kabo-accuse-de-pratique-de-sorcellerie-il-confirme>, accessed 19 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

²⁷¹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Training Sessions on Human and Women's Rights to address Violence against Persons accused of Witchcraft, October 2012 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50a4abb22.html>, accessed 05 November 2013

that the belief in witches as a source of several misfortunes is deeply embedded in the Central African Republic's society."²⁷²

In October 2012, *UNCHR* reported that women and girls accused of witchcraft are often subject to sexual and gender-based violence,

Women, particularly old single women, and girls who are accused of witchcraft are often subject to SGBV. Due to cultural stigmas and lack of knowledge on basic rights, SGBV cases are often not reported, consequently leaving survivors/victims unassisted and perpetrators unpunished.²⁷³

In October 2012, *UNCHR* identified that belief in witchcraft is deeply embedded in local culture,

"The belief in witchcraft is so deeply embedded in the Central African culture that its inclusion as a crime in the country's penal code is hardly contested. Even some human rights lawyers and influent authorities support its criminalization."²⁷⁴

In its 2012 country report on human rights, *USDOS* reported twelve prisoners were detained on accusations of witchcraft in Ngaragba Prison and five others were convicted of the crime.²⁷⁵

In April 2010, *UNICEF* reported that cases of witchcraft represent a large number of cases brought before the family courts,

"Cases of witchcraft in Central African Republic represent a large number of cases brought before the family courts (tribunaux de Grande Instance). Prior to appearing before the judge, children accused of witchcraft have already undergone a long procedure of "healing", whether by traditional healers or churches.

They have often suffered acts of violence from their family and community. The children are sometimes seized from the hands of an angry mob determined to make them confess. Once at the police station, the children are forced to confess their witch activities and to inform on the person who supposedly transmitted the witchcraft to them, who is then also brought before the court. During the initial enquiries, which may last several months or even years, the children are generally kept in prison in order to protect them from mob violence. Due to a lack of infrastructure and juvenile detention facilities, they have to share cells with adult prisoners."²⁷⁶

²⁷² UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Training Sessions on Human and Women's Rights to address Violence against Persons accused of Witchcraft, October 2012 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50a4abb22.html>, accessed 05 November 2013

²⁷³ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Training Sessions on Human and Women's Rights to address Violence against Persons accused of Witchcraft, October 2012 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50a4abb22.html>, accessed 05 November 2013

²⁷⁴ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Training Sessions on Human and Women's Rights to address Violence against Persons accused of Witchcraft, October 2012 <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50a4abb22.html>, accessed 05 November 2013

²⁷⁵ USDOS- US Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights 2012: Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 04 November 2013

²⁷⁶ UNICEF, Children Accused of Witchcraft : An anthropological study of contemporary practices in Africa, April 2010, page 39 http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/wcaro_children-accused-of-witchcraft-in-Africa.pdf , accessed 05 November 2013

In April 2010 *UNICEF* reported on the treatment procedures of children accused of witchcraft,

"In the Central African Republic, I witnessed treatment that required an operation. Since witchcraft is defined as a substance in the child's abdomen, the nganga makes an incision in the child's belly, using an unsterilized knife, and cuts out a small piece of intestine, which symbolizes the witchcraft. As a result, the children are "cleaned."²⁷⁷

In May 2009 *UNICEF* reported on the high number of witchcraft accusations in Central African Republic,

"hundreds, or even thousands, of children and elderly people – women in particular – have been accused of being witches in CAR. Belief in witchcraft is widespread in the region, but accusing children is a more recent development."²⁷⁸

In May 2009 *UNICEF* further reported that witchcraft is a criminal offence under domestic law,

"In CAR, witchcraft is a criminal offense under the penal code, punishable by execution in cases where the 'witch' is accused of homicide. Although no one accused of witchcraft in CAR has received the death penalty, many have been arrested for these practices and the accused are often victims of mob justice."²⁷⁹

4.2.7 Early and forced marriage

UNICEF data collected between 2002 and 2011 estimated 68 percent of women were married before the age of 18, according to *UNICEF* data collected between 2002 and 2011, and that 29 percent of women were married before the age of 15.²⁸⁰

In its country report on human rights 2012, *USDOS* reported that the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs had limited means to address the problem of early marriage.²⁸¹ *USDOS* reported that early marriage was usually reported in less educated and rural environments where the government lacked authority,²⁸² and that the phenomenon of early marriage was more common within Muslim communities.²⁸³

²⁷⁷ *UNICEF*, Children Accused of Witchcraft : An anthropological study of contemporary practices in Africa, April 2010, page 38 http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/wcaro_children-accused-of-witchcraft-in-Africa.pdf , accessed 05 November 2013

²⁷⁸ *UNICEF*, Scapegoating the most vulnerable in the Central African Republic, 12 May 2009, http://www.unicef.org/protection/car_49658.html, accessed 03 November 2013

²⁷⁹ *UNICEF*, Scapegoating the most vulnerable in the Central African Republic, 12 May 2009, http://www.unicef.org/protection/car_49658.html, accessed 03 November 2013

²⁸⁰ *UNICEF*, Central Africa Republic: Statistics, 2013 http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/car_statistics.html, accessed 05 November 2013

²⁸¹ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁸² US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

²⁸³ US State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012: Central African Republic, 2013 <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 30 October 2013

In July 2012 *U.N. Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery Gulnara Shahinian* stated in the thematic report on servile marriage to the Human Rights Council that some girls and women in the CAR were subject to servile marriage “in which a spouse is reduced to a commodity over whom any or all the powers of ownership are attached.” The *U.N. Special Rapporteur* stated that this type of marriage is considered a form of slavery,

“Conflict and post-conflict situations have also contributed to an increase in servile marriage, given that girls and women recruited or abducted by armed groups have been forced to marry combatants. Armed groups such as the Lord’s Resistance Army have been found to force girls into servile marriage in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.”²⁸⁴

According to the *U.N. Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery*, CAR ranked 6th place for highest numbers of early marriage in the world, which resulted in servile marriage in most cases,

“Studies have shown that an overwhelming majority of women in servile marriage were forced to be girl brides.”²⁸⁵

In the report *The State of the World’s Children 2011: Adolescence – An Age of Opportunity*, *UNICEF* reported that 61% of women 20–24 years old had been married or in union before they were 18 years old (between 2000 and 2009); 57% in urban areas, 64% in rural areas. On the marital status of adolescents, *UNICEF* further stated that 57% girls aged 15–19 were currently married or in union. Moreover, 38% women aged 20–24 had given birth before the age of 18.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ Rapport thématique sur le mariage servile, Rapport de la Rapporteuse spéciale sur les formes contemporaines d’esclavage, y compris leurs causes et leurs conséquences, Mme Gulnara Shahinian, Conseil des droits de l’homme, 10 July 2012, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session21/A-HRC-21-41_fr.pdf, accessed 27 June 2013

In English : http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session21/A-HRC-21-41_en.pdf

²⁸⁵ Rapport thématique sur le mariage servile, Rapport de la Rapporteuse spéciale sur les formes contemporaines d’esclavage, y compris leurs causes et leurs conséquences, Mme Gulnara Shahinian, Conseil des droits de l’homme, 10 July 2012, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session21/A-HRC-21-41_fr.pdf, accessed 27 June 2013

In English : http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session21/A-HRC-21-41_en.pdf

²⁸⁶ UNICEF, *La situation des enfants dans le monde, L’adolescence, l’âge de tous les possibles*, February 2011, http://www.unicef.org/french/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_FR_02092011.pdf, accessed 27 June 2013
In English : http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/SOWC_2011_Main_Report_EN_02242011.pdf

5. Freedom of Movement

5.1 Domestic legal framework

Article 4 of the *Constitution* provides that,

“Freedom of the person is inviolable.

The freedoms of movement, residence and establishment throughout the territory are guaranteed to all in the conditions laid down by law.”²⁸⁷

5.2 Travel restrictions for certain groups and in certain areas, including documentation needed for internal travel

In July 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that motorcycle taxi drivers announced they would demonstrate in the town of Berberati against police abuses and illegal barriers. *RJDH* reported several acts of aggression by police forces on motorcycle taxi drivers in the sub-prefecture of Gamboula (west).²⁸⁸

According to Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* in December 2011, the Secretary-General of the Central African Observatory for Human Rights (“Observatoire centrafricain des droits de l’homme” -OCDH) reported violations of the freedom of movement guaranteed by law in the CAR. He reported that road barriers often prevented citizens to travel internally even if they possessed the proper documentation (cards) and that they were forced to pay a bribe.²⁸⁹

In its 2011 country report the *USDOS* reported that it was common for police and military personnel, customs officers, and other officials to ask travellers to pay bribes, and for rebels to set roadblocks,

“Police and military personnel, customs officers, and other officials harassed travelers unwilling or unable to pay bribes or “taxes” at checkpoints along intercity roads and at major intersections in Bangui, although the number of these roadblocks continued to decrease. Merchants and traders travelling the more than 350-mile route from Bangui to Bangassou encountered an average of 25 military barriers. While the fees extorted varied for private passengers, commercial vehicles reported paying fees of up to 9,000 to 10,000 CFA francs (\$18 to \$20) at each checkpoint to continue their journeys. Rebels and armed groups routinely restricted movement by setting roadblocks or otherwise closing transit routes.

²⁸⁷ Constitution, 5 December 2004, http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/fr/text.jsp?file_id=193706, accessed 24 June 2013

²⁸⁸ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Berberati : Les conducteurs de mototaxis annoncent une marche de protestation, 25 July 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/07/25/berberati-les-conducteurs-de-mototaxis-annonce-une-marche-de-protestation/>, accessed 18 July 2013

²⁸⁹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : Un bilan mitigé des droits de l’homme en 2011 (OCDH), 29 December 2011, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2011/12/29/bangui-un-bilan-mitige-des-droits-de-lhomme-en-2011ocdh/>, accessed 18 July 2013

[...] On multiple occasions during the year, police, gendarmes, and the FACA [Central African Armed Forces] impeded the travel of members of the opposition parties, delaying their travel in some cases for months.”²⁹⁰

In 2011 regional human rights NGO *Réseau des défenseurs des droits humains en Afrique centrale (REDHAC)* stated that political opponents to Francois Bozize faced regular travel restrictions. They reported that former President Ange Felix Patasse died in April 2011 after the authorities refused him twice to travel abroad to Malabo to get a medical treatment.²⁹¹ The *USDOS* also reported the case of former President Patasse who was prevented from reaching the airport by government security officials although he was trying to be medically evacuated.²⁹²

5.3 Treatment of persons returning from abroad

In 2013 *UNHCR* reported that persons returning from abroad may be at risk of statelessness due to lack of documentation,

“UNHCR will help the national authorities to issue civil-status and national identity documents to IDPs, targeted nomadic communities (such as the Fulbe ethnic group), refugees returning spontaneously from Cameroon and Chad , and others at risk of statelessness in areas of displacement and return.”²⁹³

In its 2011 country report on human rights Practices, *USDOS* reported that most people were prevented from returning to their homes and needed humanitarian assistance,

“Sporadic fighting between government forces and armed groups, attacks on civilians by armed groups including the LRA, and armed banditry prevented the country’s IDPs, most of whom were displaced in 2006, from returning to their homes. At year’s end there were approximately 170,000 IDPs, 66,545 of whom were returnees who were considered displaced. While returns started in 2009, these returnees were still in the process of reintegration and therefore still considered displaced. More than 22,000 were newly displaced during the year as a result of internal conflict and banditry. The number of individuals who had fled the country totaled 164,905 and were largely located in neighboring countries.

In July 2010 the government reopened the roads north of Ndele to humanitarian access after a prolonged closure due to government efforts to fight the CPJP.

²⁹⁰ Département d’Etat américain, République centrafricaine, Résumé analytique, 2011, http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/CENTRAL_AFRICAN_REPUBLIC-FRENCH-FINAL_2011.pdf, accessed 16 July 2013

In English : http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/2011_CAR_HRR_English.pdf

²⁹¹ Réseau des défenseurs des droits humains en Afrique centrale, Rapport sur la situation des Droits de l’homme en République Centrafricaine Janvier à Mars 2011 N°2, 2011,

<http://www.redhac.org/interne.php?page=article.php&idmenu=54&idsmenu=132&idarticle=90>, accessed 16 July 2013

²⁹² Département d’Etat américain, République centrafricaine, Résumé analytique, 2011,

http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/CENTRAL_AFRICAN_REPUBLIC-FRENCH-FINAL_2011.pdf, accessed 16 July 2013

In English : http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/2011_CAR_HRR_English.pdf

²⁹³ UNHCR, Appel global 2013- actualisation, 2013, <http://www.unhcr.fr/50c5bc175ea.html>, accessed 18 July 2013

In English : <http://www.unhcr.org/50a9f81eb.html>

The government did not provide protection or assistance to IDPs, citing a lack of means, but allowed humanitarian organizations to provide services such as assistance with seeds and agricultural materials or provision of identity documents.

There were no reports of the government attacking or specifically targeting IDPs. The government occasionally blocked humanitarian access in areas frequented by armed groups. There were no reports of the government inhibiting the free movement of IDPs."²⁹⁴

5.4 Internal displacement (IDPs)

In October 2013 *UN OCHA* reported that 394,979 people were displaced as of 30 September 2013.²⁹⁵

In October 2013 *UN OCHA* reported that there had been mass displacement in Ouham Province following attacks in Bossangoa in September,

"A UN-led humanitarian mission visited Bossangoa (Ouham Province, north-west) to assess the situation and identify the needs of the internally displaced people (IDPs). Since 7 September, clashes between former Séléka rebels, self-defense groups and unidentified armed groups persist in the province. Villages across the province have been emptied of people and several have been destroyed by armed groups. People have fled into the forest and Bossangoa. Over 36,000 of the newly displaced have sought refuge inside the compound of the Bossangoa Catholic Church, provincial office and at a local school. More than 170,000 people, half of them minors, have fled from their homes in the Ouham province because of violence."²⁹⁶

In August 2013 *IRIN* reported that 206,000 million people had been displaced, "many of them living in the bush with little or no access to humanitarian assistance. 100,000 of them are children."²⁹⁷

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that,

"Prior to the takeover of Bangui, more than 173,000 people had been displaced in the north and north-east of the country and further displacements have since been reported from Bangui and west of Bangui."²⁹⁸

The *U.N. Secretary-General* reported that 45,000 people fled the country from December 2012 to April 2013 to seek asylum in neighbouring countries.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ Département d'Etat américain, République centrafricaine, Résumé analytique, 2011, http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/CENTRAL_AFRICAN_REPUBLIC-FRENCH-FINAL_2011.pdf, accessed 16 July 2013

In English : http://photos.state.gov/libraries/bangui/232451/conshr/2011_CAR_HRR_English.pdf

²⁹⁵ UN OCHA, Central African Republic (CAR): Situation Report No 28. (as of 4 October 2013), http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Situation%20Report%2028_EN.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

²⁹⁶ UN OCHA, Central African Republic (CAR): Situation Report No 28. (as of 4 October 2013), http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Situation%20Report%2028_EN.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

²⁹⁷ IRIN, Central African Republic - a crisis in numbers, 16 August 2013, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/98582/central-african-republic-a-crisis-in-numbers>, accessed 20 August 2013

²⁹⁸ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

In its 2013 country operations profile on the CAR, the *UNHCR* stated that most IDPS had not been able to return to their destroyed villages, and needed shelter, water, health and education assistance. The *UNHCR* reported that,

“Many IDPs are at risk of statelessness as they do not possess civil-status or identity documents.”³⁰⁰

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that new clashes in the village of Bokandi prevented IDPs who had fled to the outskirts of Kabo from going back to their village to get food or work on their crops. New clashes erupted between members of the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC) headed by Abdoulaye Miskine and forces of the Front populaire pour le rassemblement (FPR) headed by Baba-Ladde.³⁰¹

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* together with local NGO *Integrated Community Development International* reported that 405 persons– mainly women and children– fled from villages around Boali to take refuge in Bossembele after being attacked by unidentified armed forces. The local Red Cross reported that their sanitary and food situation was critical. *RJDH* reported that the sub-prefectures of Boali and Bossembele were facing persisting insecurity – earlier in August 2 people died in the village of Boudouli, and houses were looted in Zoubara village.³⁰²

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 45 people fled from the village of Zoubara after being attacked by armed forces they suspected of being members of the Baba-Ladde rebel group.³⁰³

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 6,000 IDPs from Batangafo and Nana-Outa (north) had just received supplies from the ICRC. They originated from 21 villages and fled from the Baba-Ladde rebel group.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁹ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013

In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

³⁰⁰ UNHCR, Profil d’opérations 2013, République centrafricaine, 2013, <http://www.unhcr.fr/50c5bc175ea.html>, accessed 18 July 2013

In English : <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e45c156&submit=GO>

³⁰¹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Kabo : L’insécurité inquiète les déplacés du village de Bokandi, 24 August 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/394>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

³⁰² Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Boali : 405 déplacés internes à cause de l’insécurité qui perdure, 23 August 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/393>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

³⁰³ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Boali : La présence des hommes armés fait des déplacés internes, 16 August 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/08/16/boali-la-presence-des-hommes-armes-fait-des-deplaces-internes>, accessed 22 June 2013 [The information was verified by the humanitarian web based reporting tool *Carte de crises- Centrafrique*]

³⁰⁴ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Batangafo : Le CICR vole au secours de 6000 déplacés internes, August 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/08/15/batangafo-le-cicr-vole-au-secours-de-6000-deplaces-internes>, accessed 22 June 2013

6. Trafficking of persons

6.1 Prevalence

In its 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report *USDOS* listed the Central African Republic as a Tier 3 list country, reporting that it is a source and destination country for children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking,

"While the scope of the trafficking problem is unknown, observers report that most victims appear to be CAR citizens trafficked within the country and that a smaller number move back and forth between Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Sudan. Trafficking offenders – likely including members of expatriate communities from Nigeria, South Sudan, and Chad, as well as transient merchants and herders – subject children to domestic servitude, commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labour in agriculture, artisanal gold and diamond mines, and street vending. Within the country, children are at risk of becoming victims of forced labour, *Ba'aka* (Pygmy) minorities are at risk of becoming victims of forced agricultural work – especially in the region around the Lobaye rainforest – and girls are at risk of being exploited in the sex trade in urban centers."³⁰⁵

In January 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 2 young boys were victims of an attempted abduction on their way to kindergarten in Gbate. Local officials called for public vigilance because abduction of children was increasing in the Lobaye prefecture.³⁰⁶

6.2 State willingness and ability to provide effective protection, prevention and prosecution

In June 2013 *USDOS* reported that the CAR Government does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so,

The government, which has limited human and financial resources, did not investigate and prosecute any trafficking offenses, identify or provide protective services to trafficking victims, or take steps to raise public awareness about the dangers of human trafficking. The 2010 Central African penal code outlaws all forms of trafficking in persons, but awareness of this statute remained low. In July 2011, the government, via the Prime Minister's

³⁰⁵ *USDOS* - US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons Report 2012 - Central African Republic, 19 June 2012 http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/219965/327006_en.html, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁰⁶ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Mbaïki : tentative d'enlèvement de deux mineurs, 26 January 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/01/26/mbaiki-tentative-denlevement-de-deux-mineurs/>, accessed 20 July 2013

office, formally launched an inter-ministerial committee – the National Council on Child Protection – to fight child exploitation, including child trafficking; the council implemented aspects of the 2008 National Action Plan for the Prevention and Protection of Abused, Sexually Exploited, and Trafficked Children. The government also increased its annual financial support for a multipurpose child shelter.”³⁰⁷

In June 2013 *USDOS* reported that the CAR government made “no discernible anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts” during the reporting period,

"The Government of the Central African Republic made no discernible anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts during the reporting period. Article 151 of its penal code prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons, and prescribes penalties of five to 10 years' imprisonment, which are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with penalties prescribed for other serious offenses, such as rape. If the offense involves a child victim, Article 151 prescribes the additional penalty of hard labor. If the offense involves a child victim of sex trafficking or forced labor similar to slavery, the prescribed penalty is life imprisonment with hard labor. Articles 7 and 8 of the January 2009 Labor Code prohibit forced and bonded labor and prescribe sufficiently stringent penalties of five to 10 years' imprisonment. Victims can file civil suits to seek damages from their traffickers. These provisions, however, are not enforced and no cases of suspected human trafficking offenses were investigated or prosecuted during the reporting period. Traditional dispute resolution methods are widely practiced throughout the country, often to the exclusion of formal legal proceedings to punish criminal acts... [-]...Law enforcement officials reported that they are not provided the appropriate technical training and resources needed to identify and investigate trafficking cases, and officials outside the capital may not have access to copies of the legal codes.”³⁰⁸

In June 2013 *USDOS* reported that the CAR government had not made any “significant efforts” to ensure trafficking victims had access to protective services,

"The government did not make significant efforts to ensure that victims of trafficking received access to protective services during the reporting period. The CAR government did not engage in efforts to identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, though the government's presence outside the capital, especially in the diamond-producing northeast, remains limited to non-existent...[-]...During 2011, the two centers provided care or assistance to 243 vulnerable children, some of whom may have been trafficking victims. Justice officials claimed that trafficking victims were not penalized for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked, though no victims were identified during the year. The government does not provide legal alternatives to the removal of foreign victims to countries where they may face hardship or retribution, and no such victims were identified.”³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ USDOS - US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 - Central African Republic, June 2013 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁰⁸ USDOS - US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 - Central African Republic, June 2013 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁰⁹ USDOS - US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 - Central African Republic, June 2013 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>, accessed 04 November 2013

In June 2013, *USDOS* reported that the CAR government undertook “moderate” anti-trafficking prevention efforts during the reporting period,

"The government undertook moderate anti-trafficking prevention efforts during the reporting period. In November 2012, during a working group meeting convened by an NGO, government representatives and other stakeholders committed to the drafting of a national plan to combat trafficking. In December, this group constructed a rudimentary database in an attempt to increase efforts to collect and share data across agencies. The working group has continued to meet twice weekly to develop the national plan, which was not finalized by the close of the reporting period. The government took no action to establish a policy against child soldiering or raise awareness about the country's laws prohibiting the use of children in armed forces. The government did not take any measures to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts during the year. The government did not take any measures to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts during the year."³¹⁰

In October 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that the international NGO *International partnership for human development (IPHD)* launched a programme in Bangui aimed at raising awareness and informing local authorities on the trafficking of persons. They also planned to set up a shelter and reintegration support centre for victims of trafficking.³¹¹

[See also [Section B.4., 4.2.2, The recruitment and use of children in rebel armies](#)]

³¹⁰ USDOS - US Department of State: Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 - Central African Republic, June 2013 <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>, accessed 04 November 2013

³¹¹ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : vers une sensibilisation contre l'exploitation des personnes, 8 October 2012, <http://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/10/08/banqui-vers-une-sensibilisation-contre-l'exploitation-des-personnes/>, accessed 20 July 2013

7. Torture

In June 2013 French Catholic NGOs *Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement (CCFD)-Terre Solidaire*, *Action des chrétiens pour l'abolition de la torture (ACAT)*, *Secours Catholique/ Caritas France* and *Apprentis d'Auteuil* stated that civilians had been subjected to widespread human rights violations including torture,

“Summary executions, sexual violence, assault perpetrated on the basis of religious and ethnic discrimination, arrest of political opponents and their relatives, torture, disappearance, recruitment of child soldiers, widespread looting.”³¹²

In May 2013 France based online news agency *Afrik.com* reported that a Seleka member claimed on the national radio that he cut the throat of a young civilian after having tortured him in the Renaissance Palace [former Presidential Palace in Bangui³¹³]. *Afrik.com* reported that the body was left outside the Palace for everyone to witness.³¹⁴

In May 2013 international NGO *Human Rights Watch* reported that members of the Seleka rebel coalition have committed grave violations against civilians, including torture, summary executions, pillage and rape.³¹⁵

In May 2013 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that a former non-commissioned officer of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) had been “abducted, tortured and arrested” by members of the Seleka in Basse-Kotto neighbourhood (5th district in Bangui). He was being held in custody in the Central Office for the Repression of Banditry (“Office central de repression contre le banditisme”). His wife stated that she fell unconscious when she witnessed her husband being tortured.³¹⁶

According to *U.N. News Centre* on 16 April 2013, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay urged action “to stop the lawlessness and grave violations to civilians in the CAR including torture, recruitment of children by armed forces, rape and kidnappings.”³¹⁷

³¹² CCFD-Terre Solidaire, SOS pour la Centrafrique : Sauver la population de l'anarchie actuelle, 13 June 2013, <http://ccfd-teresolidaire.org/projets/afrique/sos-pour-la-4235>, accessed 20 July 2013

³¹³ La Nouvelle Centrafrique, Centrafrique : Le palais de la Renaissance vandalisé, 29 March 2013, <http://www.lanouvellecentrafrique.info/centrafrique-le-palais-de-la-rennaissance-vandalise>, accessed 17 June 2013

³¹⁴ Afrik.com, Centrafrique : Un jeune homme égorgé par la Séléka, 21 May 2013, <http://www.afrik.com/centrafrique-un-jeune-homme-egorge-par-la-seleka>, accessed 17 June 2013

³¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, République centrafricaine: De nombreuses exactions ont été commises après le coup d'État, 10 May 2013, <http://www.hrw.org/fr/news/2013/05/09/republique-centrafricaine-de-nombreuses-exactions-ont-ete-commises-apres-le-coup-det>, accessed 20 July 2013

In English : <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/05/10/central-african-republic-rampant-abuses-after-coup>

³¹⁶ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : Un sous officier des FACA torturé et arrêté par des éléments de la Séléka, 15 May 2013, <https://reseaudesjournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2013/05/15/bangui-un-sous-officier-des-faca-torture-et-arrete-par-des-elements-de-la-seleka/>, accessed 20 July 2013

³¹⁷ Centre d'actualités de l'ONU, Des responsables onusiens réclament la fin des violences en République centrafricaine, 16 April 2013, <http://www.un.org/apps/newsFr/storyF.asp?NewsID=30163&Cr=centrafrique&Cr1=#.Uer8Po3wmpI>, accessed 20 July 2013

In English :

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that despite laws prohibiting torture, police and security forces beat and tortured suspects and detainees with impunity,

"Although the law and the constitution prohibit torture and specify punishment for those found guilty of physical abuse, police and other security services continued to torture, beat, and otherwise abuse criminal suspects, detainees, and prisoners, according to local human rights groups such as the Central African Association Against Torture (ACAT) and the Central African Human Rights League (LCDH).

The government did not punish police who reportedly tortured suspects, and impunity remained a serious problem. Family members of victims and human rights groups, including the Central African Monitoring Group on Human Rights (OCDH), filed complaints with the courts, but authorities took no action. Members of security forces raped, robbed, and abused civilians in both conflict and nonconflict areas. Human rights lawyers reported that victims of abuse by authorities were often pressured by relatives not to pursue their cases due to fear of reprisal."³¹⁸

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that torture occurred in detention centres run by the Research and Investigation Section and the OCB, the

"According to ACAT, torture and beating of detainees occurred frequently in detention centers run by the Research and Investigation Section (SRI), under the minister of defense, and the OCB, under the director general of police. ACAT reported police employed several forms of torture, including "le cafe," which entailed repeated beating of the soles of the feet with a baton or stick. Immediately after administering the beating, police would sometimes force the victim to walk on badly bruised feet, and if the individual was unable to do so, police continued beating the individual."³¹⁹

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that civilians were subjected to mistreatment by non state armed groups,

"Civilians continued to suffer mistreatment in territories controlled by nonstate armed entities."³²⁰

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44667&Cr=Central+African+Republic&Cr1=&Kw1=central+african+republic&Kw2=&Kw3=#.Uer8ec3wmpk>

³¹⁸ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³¹⁹ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³²⁰ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

C. Other Human Rights Issues

1. Overview of issues surrounding the rule of law/administration of justice

1.1 *Impunity for extrajudicial killings, disappearances, and other human rights violations by state actors*

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that the Seleka rule with complete impunity,

"With no checks on their power, the Seleka rule arbitrarily and with complete impunity, with the government failing to follow through on its public commitment to bring to justice those responsible for recent abuses."³²¹

In September 2013 *Human Rights Watch* reported that they have concerns about the political and judicial will, despite the governments stated commitment to tackle impunity,

"the Seleka are now committing similar abuses with near total impunity in Bangui and the provinces. Human Rights Watch welcomes the establishment of a commission of inquiry and the government's stated commitment to tackle impunity. But we are concerned about the lack of political will to ensure fair and impartial justice for all persons responsible for abuses. National judicial authorities must make legitimate efforts to hold violators of human rights responsible, including Seleka members, in order to ensure equitable justice."³²²

In May 2013, the *U.N. Secretary-General* stated that CAR was in a state of lawlessness, resulting in a circle of impunity and violence,

"In the current state of lawlessness, verging on anarchy, the main feature of the human rights situation is the pervasive impunity for acts of violence throughout the country. Lack of accountability for past and present violations creates opportunities for new violations. Thus, impunity is a challenge for the transition, raising the risks of revenge, inter-communal and inter-confessional conflicts, as well as conflict driven by unaddressed grievances."³²³

³²¹ Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

³²² Human Rights Watch, I can still smell the dead, The forgotten human rights crisis in the Central African Republic, September 2013, http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/car0913_ForUpload.pdf, accessed 20 October 2013

³²³ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

In May 2013 international NGO *Amnesty International* stated that there was no evidence that the government set up by Michel Djotodia after the coup had plans to bring the Seleka members who committed human rights violations to justice,

“The government has announced investigations into human rights violations by the government of former President Bozize but there is reportedly no evidence that the new government has plans to bring its own soldiers who carried out human rights violations to justice.”³²⁴

In May 2013 French news media on Africa *Jeune Afrique* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported that the new Central African authorities had issued an international arrest warrant against former President Francois Bozize. Two of the charges are crimes against humanity and incitement to genocide. Bangui Prosecutor Alain Tolmo declared those crimes were under the competence of the International Criminal Court. He further stated that Francois Bozize was so far charged with 22 cases of murders, 53 cases of arrests, illegal confinements and arbitrary detention, 3,823 acts of destruction and burning of houses and 119 summary executions. The new authorities set up a mixed inquiry commission (“Commission d’enquête mixte”) in charge of investigating on human rights violations committed during Francois Bozize Presidency as well as after the Seleka rebellion took over power on 24 March 2013.³²⁵

On 31 May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* also reported that an international arrest warrant had been issued against Francois Bozize.³²⁶

In May 2013 French daily newspaper *Le Monde* reported that according to Minister for Justice Arsene Sende, Francois Bozize was suspected of having ordered 119 summary executions perpetrated by his personal guards. His guards were headed by Captain Eugene Ngaikosset also known as “the Butcher of Paoua” (a town in the north of CAR). Minister Arsene Sende mentioned the disappearance of former Minister Charles Massi, former Head of the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) rebel group,

“[Charles Massi] was arrested at the beginning of 2010 in Chad, handed to Central African authorities and later executed by President Bozize’s personal guards.”³²⁷

According to *Le Monde*, Minister for Justice Arsene Sende also stated that about 10 people suspected of being members of Seleka forces or of having close relationships

³²⁴ Amnesty International, Synthèse sur la situation des droits humains en République centrafricaine, 14 May 2013, <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/info/AFR19/001/2013/fr>, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : <http://www.amnesty.org/fr/library/asset/AFR19/001/2013/fr/eb0b98bd-6a3f-4433-b3a5-b807bdd9c3b8/afr190012013en.html>

³²⁵ Jeune Afrique, Centrafrique : Emission d'un mandat d'arrêt international contre François Bozizé, 31 May 2013, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20130531162251/>, accessed 12 June 2013

³²⁶ Le Monde, Mandat d'arrêt international contre l'ex-président centrafricain François Bozizé, 31 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/31/mandat-d-arret-international-contre-l-ex-president-centrafricain-francois-bozize_3421866_3212.html, accessed 13 June 2013

³²⁷ Le Monde, Centrafrique : Bozizé visé par une enquête pour violations des droits de l'homme, 4 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2013/05/04/centrafrique-bozize-vise-par-une-enquete-pour-violations-des-droits-de-l-homme_3171101_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

with them were executed on 23 March 2013 by an officer belonging to Francois Bozize's personal guard at Ndres Cimetery (north of the capital).³²⁸

1.2 Arbitrary arrest and detention

In September 2013, the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* further reported on violations of international law committed from 24 March to 11 July 2013. The *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported dozens of cases of arbitrary arrest and detention,

"The mission conducted dozens of interviews, including with detainees, their families and witnesses in Bangui and several prefectures who reported cases of arbitrary arrest and detention by the Séléka during the seizure of Bangui, which escalated in the following weeks and continued. Victims included judges, lawyers, members of the FACA, former regime officials and persons associated with (or perceived to be part of) the Bozizé regime in what appears to have been retaliatory operations. A prominent case of arbitrary arrest and detention was that of Mohamed Moussa Dhaffan, former Minister for Forestry, Water, Hunting and Fishing and his brother, Colonel Ahmed Dhaffan, who have been arbitrarily detained since 29 June 2013."³²⁹

In its annual report 2013 *Amnesty International* reported on incidents of individuals being detained without charge or trial,

"Several people associated with the Ministers of Finance and Justice (who had been dismissed in June and July respectively amid reports that President Bozizé suspected them of plotting to overthrow the government) were arrested in July and August. Those arrested were Laurent Feindiro, brother of the former Minister of Justice, Jean Bianga and Serge-Venant Magna, the driver and a civil servant of the former Minister of Finance respectively. They were still being held without charge or trial at the end of the year."³³⁰

In its country report covering the events of 2012 *USDOS* reported that despite legal provisions protecting against arbitrary arrest and detention these were frequently flouted by security forces,

"The law provides protection against arbitrary arrest and detention and accords detainees the right to a judicial determination of the legality of their detention. However, security forces frequently ignored such provisions, and arbitrary arrest and detention remained problems.

In late March two employees of a safari company operating in the southeast were arrested and held for nearly five months without charge in connection

³²⁸ Le Monde, Centrafrique : Bozizé visé par une enquête pour violations des droits de l'homme, 4 May 2013, http://www.lemonde.fr/afrrique/article/2013/05/04/centrafrique-bozize-vise-par-une-enquete-pour-violations-des-droits-de-l-homme_3171101_3212.html, accessed 15 June 2013

³²⁹ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 56 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

³³⁰ Amnesty International, Annual Report 2013: The State of the World's Human Rights, 2013, page 57 http://files.amnesty.org/air13/AmnestyInternational_AnnualReport2013_complete_en.pdf, accessed 31 October 2013

with the massacre of 13 villagers near Bakouma, despite reports indicating the killings were a likely result of LRA activity. They were reportedly detained at the request of the minister of justice and his brother, who demanded bribes in exchange for their release. Both men were released in September.

In October, Boniface Mobe, an agricultural expert, was reportedly arrested by the presidential guard and detained without charge at Camp de Roux in Bangui for several weeks. No reason for his arrest was provided."³³¹

In August 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported that 76 detainees out of 552 who had been liberated from Ngaragba Central Prison (in Bangui) had "chosen to return voluntarily" to the jail. On 2 August, unsuccessful candidates to enter the FACA forces had liberated the prisoners. Amongst the 76 detainees, some had been sentenced and others were waiting to be tried. Most of those who had already received a sentence were soldiers and senior officers who had been tried by a military court. One of the detainees, Francisco Wilibona, stated that he had been arrested on 16 July 2010 [more than 2 years before the article] and that he was still waiting to be heard by a judge. He stated that he came back to the jail in order to understand why he was being arrested."³³²

In January 2012 French international news radio *RFI* reported that former Minister of Defence Jean-Jacques Demafouth was still being held in custody one week after having been arrested on the grounds of "attempted destabilisation." According to the law someone can be held for 72 hours, which is only renewable once. After this limit, anyone who is arrested must be presented to the prosecutor. In a radio interview former Minister Jean-Jacques Demafouth's lawyer stated that he had been banned from meeting his client a second time, which is contrary to the law."³³³

1.3 Due Process

In May 2013 the *U.N. Secretary-General* reported to the U.N. Security Council that most of the infrastructure supporting the justice system had been destroyed during the Seleka coup,

"The Seleka offensive destroyed much of the justice system of the Central African Republic. In the 10 jurisdictions of the country, looting and plundering carried out by Seleka elements has destroyed most of the infrastructure that supported the justice system, including courthouses, appeal courts, court dossiers, prisons, prison registries and prosecutor files. The justice system, including prisons, will need to be rebuilt."³³⁴

³³¹ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³³² Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l'Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : 76 détenus de retour dans leur geôle après leur libération forcée, 7 August 2012, <https://www.cartehumanitaire-rca.org/reports/view/339>, accessed 20 July 2013

³³³ RFI, RCA/ Demafouth: L'avocat de l'ex-ministre de la Défense dénonce une détention arbitraire, 31 January 2012, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20120113-rca-avocat-ex-ministre-defense-denonce-une-detention-arbitraire>, accessed 20 July 2013

³³⁴ Nations Unies, Conseil de Sécurité, Rapport du Secrétaire général sur la situation en République centrafricaine, 3 May 2013, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&Lang=F, accessed 17 July 2013
In English : http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/261&referer=/english/&Lang=E

In May 2012 French international news radio *RFI* reported that Erik Mararv, a Swedish owner of a hunting concession in Bakouma region (east), had been charged with murder after 13 gold miners had been killed. Erik Mararv had been arrested 2 months earlier. His lawyer M^e Morouba stated that there was a two-tier justice system. According to *RFI*, despite the lack of information given by justice officials and an unusually lengthy procedure the Ministry for Justice stated that the procedure was perfectly normal. Erik Mararv's lawyer claimed that the perpetrators of the crime were members of the LRA.³³⁵ In July 2012 international NGO *Human Rights Watch* stated that although there were strong indications that the LRA had carried out the attack, the authorities had quickly arrested Erik Mararv, the Swedish manager and owner of the hunting concession, and David Simpson, an employee who is a British pilot along with 11 Central African employees. *Human Rights Watch* reported that in June Erik Mararv had been released from prison on "sick leave." The 12 others remained in detention in Bangui. *Human Rights Watch* stated that Erik Mararv and his employees had been held for questioning much longer than allowed by law,

"The case against the 13 CAWA [Central African Wildlife Adventures hunting concession] employees has raised serious due process concerns. [...] The employees were only charged with an offense on May 8, after being held for several weeks. Central African law permits authorities to hold people for questioning for 72 hours, which is renewable for another 72 hours if required, but not beyond. This limit was passed for all the 13 CAWA employees who were detained."³³⁶

On 28 May 2012 *Human Rights Watch* sent a letter to the CAR Minister for justice stating that according to its investigations, the LRA, not the hunting reserve employees, probably killed the 13 gold miners and called on the judicial authorities to avoid "a miscarriage of justice" and "to take appropriate steps to ensure there is an in-depth investigation into these killings that fully explores all possible leads". *Human Rights Watch* expressed concerns with regard to the length of time the 13 employees were held without charge,

"This limit was passed for all the 13 CAWA employees who are detained. Now that the individuals have been declared formal suspects, I urge you to act to ensure that due process is followed and that if the case moves to trial, it is credible, fair, and follows international standards."³³⁷

1.4 Overview of prison and detention centre conditions

³³⁵ RFI, Centrafrique: l'avocat d'Eric Mararv accuse la LRA, 16 May 2012, <http://www.rfi.fr/afrique/20120516-republique-centrafrique-bangui-eric-mararv-safari-lra>, accessed 20 July 2013

³³⁶ Human Rights Watch, République centrafricaine : Attaque de la LRA à proximité d'une réserve de chasse, 9 July 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/fr/news/2012/07/09/r-publique-centrafricaine-attaque-de-la-lra-proximit-d-une-r-serve-de-chasse>, accessed 20 July 2013

In English : <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/09/central-african-republic-lra-attack-near-hunting-reserve>

³³⁷ Human Rights Watch, République centrafricaine: Lettre au Ministre de la Justice et de la Moralisation au sujet du Massacre sur la concession CAWA, préfecture de Mbomou, 28 May 2012, made public on 9 July 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/fr/node/108636>, accessed 20 July 2013

In English, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/07/09/central-african-republic-letter-minister-justice-massacre-cawa-concession-mbomou-pre>

1.4.1 Detention conditions

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported on violations of detention rights,

The mission was, however, allowed to visit two detention facilities, where it interviewed at least 50 detainees, including three children, in the *Office central de répression contre le banditisme* (Central Office for the Repression against Banditry) and in the *Section recherche et investigation* (Research and Investigation Section). On the premises of both places, penitentiary authorities failed to provide the mission with registration records for persons deprived of their liberty or to respond to basic due process enquiries. The detainees interviewed told the mission that they had not been informed at the time of their arrest of charges against them, or brought promptly before a judge or any other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power.³³⁸

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported that Séléka forces had begun to exercise judicial power,

"The mission received reports indicating that people had been sentenced by Séléka soldiers, even though they are not authorized by law to exercise judicial power. Reported forms of punishment varied from imprisonment to fines."³³⁹

In September 2013 the *UN High Commissioner for Human Rights* reported on the various locations where detainees were being kept,

"Some detainees were reportedly kept in homes, on governmental premises or in military camps. In one reported case, several people arrested by the Séléka were put in an empty petrol container in Bambari, resulting in at least one man dying due to gas inhalation. Despite repeated requests, the mission was not granted access to military camps where conflict-related detainees were believed to be held."³⁴⁰

In March 2013 French international television *France 24* reported on the story of a former Bozize's "personal" prisoner in Camp de Roux. Camp de Roux was located in the heart of the CAR military headquarters in Bangui and hosted so-called personal prisoners of Francois Bozize,

"For months, even for years, some men have been detained with no access to justice."³⁴¹

³³⁸ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 59 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

³³⁹ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 57 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁴⁰ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 58 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁴¹ France 24, Témoignage exclusif d'un ancien prisonnier "personnel" de Bozizé, 31 March 2013, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20130331-centrafrique-ancien-prisonnier-personnel-bozize-temoigne-mackpaven>, accessed 13 June 2013

In March 2013 *France 24* reported that former detainee, Mr. Mackpayen, stated that six or more people occupied a single cell. The only access to water was that of the toilet. It was very hot and “we were losing our skin.” Even in their cells the guards would beat them with Kalashnikovs. There was no access to hospital. He reported that when the rebels freed them some prisoners had not seen daylight in 2 years. Mr. Mackpayen was arrested on the grounds of threats to state security. He claimed that he was detained because he was working in the diamond business and publically called for information after Francois Bozize seized all diamonds in 2008. He also had links with the rebellion but denied this was the reason of his detention. He was liberated by the Seleka forces along with 30 other detainees.³⁴²

In March 2013 former detainee Mr. Mackpayen gave an interview to French international news radio *RFI* in which he reported on the conditions of detention in Camp de Roux. Prisoners were locked up 24 hours a day. Sometimes they had no access to water for several days and their skin was coming off. He reported that 9 people were gathered in his cell. They would take turns to sleep while others would stand up. Prisoners provided mutual aid. Amongst all these Bozize’s “personal” prisoners he witnessed the presence of a political prisoner, a former Minister who escaped when the Seleka forces liberated Camp de Roux. In this interview Mr. Mackpayen stated once again that some people had not seen daylight in 2 years. Detainees were served one meal a day which was “inedible.” The guards would beat people randomly. No one died in his cell during his 5 months detention; however, some prisoners left and never came back. He reported that young males aged 13 or 14 who had been taken to Camp de Roux later disappeared.³⁴³

In December 2012 Central African media association for human rights *Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine (RJDH)* reported on conditions of detention in Bangui police stations following a visit to the Central African Office for the Repression of Banditry (“Office centrafricain de répression du Banditisme”) in Damala in Bangui. 20 prisoners shared a single cell with no window solely equipped with a bucket of water. They slept on the floor with no mosquito net. They had skin disease and no access to any sanitary facilities. Some detainees reported that they sometimes had no access to food or water for 2 to 3 days. *RJDH* stated that in some police stations some people were kept in police custody without any hearing after the legal time had expired.³⁴⁴

In its country report on human rights in 2012, *USDOS* reported on prison conditions that were “substantially below international standards,”

Prison conditions were rudimentary, harsh and life threatening, and substantially below international standards. Prison conditions outside Bangui generally were worse than those in the capital. Police, gendarme investigators, and presidential guards assigned as prison wardens reportedly continued to

³⁴² France 24, Témoignage exclusif d’un ancien prisonnier “personnel” de Bozizé, 31 March 2013, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20130331-centrafricaine-ancien-prisonnier-personnel-bozize-temoigne-mackpayen>, accessed 13 June 2013

³⁴³ RFI, Invité Afrique Mackpayen le Centrafricain, 30 March 2013, <http://www.france24.com/fr/20130331-centrafricaine-ancien-prisonnier-personnel-bozize-temoigne-mackpayen>, accessed 14 June 2013

³⁴⁴ Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’Homme en République centrafricaine, Bangui : Les détenus tirent la sonnette d’alarme, 11 December 2012, <http://reseaujournalistesrca.wordpress.com/2012/12/11/bangui-les-detenus-tirent-la-sonnette-dalarme>, accessed 15 June 2013

subject prison inmates to torture and other forms of inhuman, cruel, and degrading treatment.³⁴⁵

In its country report on human rights in 2012, *USDOS* reported estimates of prisoner numbers,

"As of November 2011 there were approximately 845 prisoners, of whom 69 were women. Poor recordkeeping and incomplete access for observers prevented an accurate count of the prison population. Male and female prisoners were held in separate facilities in Bangui. Elsewhere male and female prisoners were housed in the same buildings but in separate cells. Juveniles were sometimes held with adult prisoners, and pretrial detainees were held with convicted prisoners. As of November 2011 there were 366 pretrial detainees in Ngaragba Prison and 18 in Bimbo Central Prison, both in Bangui. In some cases pretrial detainees were kept for short periods to ensure their personal security against mob violence, but in others detainees were held without trial for years. In some cases prisoners deemed a security threat were detained for extended periods without trial at Camp de Roux, a military facility in Bangui not designed as a prison."³⁴⁶

USDOS in its 2012 report further reported on inadequate basic necessities, such as food, clothing, and medicine, as well as a lack of basic sanitation and ventilation,

Basic necessities, including food, clothing, and medicine, were inadequate and often confiscated by prison officials. Prisoners depended on family members to supplement inadequate prison meals and sometimes were allowed to forage for food near the prison. According to international observers and prison officials, prison detainees outside Bangui received a meal only every two to three days from prison authorities and sometimes had to pay bribes to prison guards to secure food brought to them by their relatives. Most prisons lacked basic sanitation and ventilation, electric lighting, basic and emergency medical care, and sufficient access to potable water. In Bangui's Ngaragba Prison for men and Bimbo Central Prison for women, inmates with infectious diseases were not segregated from other inmates but often were medically released to a hospital if illnesses were severe. A nurse was available at the two prisons for inmates needing medical care. Detainees and inmates at both prisons received one meal per day. Food was insufficient, and prisoners complained of inferior ingredients. Families were allowed to bring food. Inmates slept on the floor or on thin matting provided by families or charities.³⁴⁷

USDOS reported that visits by detainees' families were permitted on a weekly basis,

Authorities at Ngaragba Prison normally permitted detainees' families to make weekly visits.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁵ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁴⁶ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁴⁷ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁴⁸ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013,

USDOS reported that conditions in Bimbo Central Prison were better than in other CAR prisons,

"Overcrowding in Bimbo Central Prison was reportedly not a problem, and children younger than five years old were allowed to stay with their mothers at the prison. Conditions for female prisoners in Bimbo Central Prison were deemed by a UN team to be substantially better than those in other prisons and in conformance with international standards."³⁴⁹

In Ngaragba Prison however, USDOS reported a rioting mob had breached the prison, which resulted in nearly all prisoners escaping,

"As of November 2011, there were 517 inmates in Ngaragba Prison; however, in August a rioting mob breached the prison, and nearly all prisoners escaped. Several were detainees held for months without appearing before a judge. The more crowded cells each held approximately 30 to 40 inmates. Prisoners usually slept on bare concrete and complained that water supplies were inadequate. In the section reserved primarily for educated prisoners and former government officials suspected or convicted of financial crimes, cells held four to eight persons."³⁵⁰

USDOS reported that conditions in detention centres were worse than those in prisons and that detainees suffered from with a lack of sunlight, lack of sanitary and sleeping facilities, no access to healthcare, bribery for family visits and food, torture and beatings,

"Conditions in detention centers were worse than those in prisons. Bangui's police detention centers consisted of overcrowded cells with very little light and leaky buckets for toilets. Poor sanitation and negligence by authorities posed a serious health risk to detainees. According to local human rights groups, lack of training and poor supervision at detention centers were serious problems and continued to result in torture and beatings. Suspects in police and gendarmerie cells had to depend on family, friends, religious groups, and NGOs for food.

Detainees with infectious diseases were not segregated from other detainees, and medicine was not available. Suspects generally slept on bare cement or dirt floors. Corruption among guards was pervasive. Guards often demanded between 200 and 300 CFA francs (\$0.40-\$0.60) to permit showers, delivery of food and water, or family visits. International observers noted that the detention center in the gendarmerie in Bouar had neither windows nor a toilet, only a bucket that was emptied every other day.

Detainees at the police facility in Bouar slept chained to each other, a measure police justified by alleging the detainees were recidivists and undisciplined. In

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁴⁹ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013,

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁵⁰ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013,

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

Bangui male and female detainees were separated; however, this was reportedly not the case in jails and temporary detention facilities in the countryside. There were no separate detention facilities for juvenile detainees, who routinely were housed with adults and often subjected to physical abuse. Arrestees without birth documentation were often treated as adults if they were not clearly minors. As in previous years, there continued to be reports of occasional deaths in prison due to adverse conditions and negligence, including lack of medical treatment for those afflicted by tuberculosis. Prison authorities reported two deaths during the year; however, many detainees were medically released to hospitals if illnesses became life threatening or grave.

On January 9, Joseph Ndaba died while in custody at the SRI detention center. Ndaba had gone to the SRI to help release two Swiss hunters whom he was escorting and who allegedly strayed close to President Bozize's private residence. Ndaba was arrested on January 6, and his family was later told by authorities to retrieve his dead body from a military clinic. At year's end no cause of death was reported."³⁵¹

In July 2013, in its national report submitted for the *Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review mechanism*, under the 'Best Practices in Human Rights Section', the *CAR government* outlined the following points of progress,

- In respect of the length of police custody, the Code of Criminal Procedure, currently being amended, provides for assistance to detainees from the very outset.
- Construction and renovation of prison facilities in large towns such as Sibut, Kaga-Bandoro, Bossangoa, Batangafo, Berbérati, Bossembélé and Bozoum
- Training for prison warders and directors to support legal security for development, the judicial system and human rights
- Demilitarization of prisons
- Separation of the sexes in Bangui and Bimbo prisons.³⁵²

1.4.2 Torture and ill-treatment of detainees

In September 2013, the *UN High Commissioner of Human Rights* reported testimonies and reports of torture and ill-treatment perpetrated by former regime forces against detainees suspected of being supporters of the Séléka, from December 2012 until the fall of the Bozizé regime,

"The mission received extensive information that, until 23 March 2013, armed forces, including the FACA, the Presidential Guard and the Young Patriots, carried out arbitrary arrests and detentions of political opponents and perceived supporters of the rebellion, including from specific ethnic

³⁵¹ USDOS- US Department of State, Country reports on Human Rights 2012, Central African Republic, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2012&dliid=204102>, accessed 06 November 2013

³⁵² Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Seventeenth session , National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21: Central African Republic, 23 July 2013, pages 12-13 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/CFSession17.aspx>, accessed 04 November 2013

communities [including the Goula, Rounga, Youlou, Kara, Sara and Hausa communities]. In Bangui, dozens of arbitrary arrests and detentions were reportedly carried out targeting individuals presumed to be supportive of the rebellion. Some were released during the seizure of the capital, while others remain unaccounted for. The mission received reliable information that at least 200 political opponents of Bozizé were unlawfully detained in Bossembélé Prison.

In several provinces, the mission received reports that, while the Séléka was advancing, forces of the former regime arbitrarily arrested and detained dozens of individuals when retreating to Bangui, subjecting them to ill-treatment and summary executions.³⁵³

In September 2013 *UN High Commissioner of Human Rights* reported that in many cases torture led to death,

"The mission interviewed, in the course of its field visits, victims of torture and ill-treatment, including detainees, witnesses and family members. In many reported cases, torture led to the death of victims. In one reported case, the victim, a 32 year old man from Gbangoro was kidnapped on 2 June 2013, when the Séléka targeted the axis Tale-Nana Markounda (Ouham Prefecture). Séléka members beat the man to death, then dumped his body on the side of the road later that day."³⁵⁴

In September 2013 *UN High Commissioner of Human Rights* reported on violations by the non-State armed group *Séléka*, on the torture and ill-treatment of civilians in places such as illegal detention centres,

"The Séléka reportedly tortured and ill-treated civilians at checkpoints, in illegal detention centres and in other places, in order to obtain information on the location of weapons, money and belongings. In Kaga-Bandoro, the mission interviewed a woman who had been victim of severe torture committed by Séléka members on 7 March 2013. The victim reported that she had been arrested by at least 16 Séléka soldiers. She was tortured for hours, beaten with weapons, kicked with boots, dragged and slapped. She was also subjected to mock executions. She was evacuated to Bangui, where she was admitted to a hospital for two months."³⁵⁵

In April 2013 French weekly news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* and French global news agency *Agence France Presse (AFP)* reported on the Bossembele military camp located 175 km north of Bangui where political prisoners under Francois Bozize regime were submitted to "torture, summary executions, unbearable

³⁵³ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 12 September 2013, paras. 30 and 31 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A-HRC-24-59_en.pdf, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁵⁴ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 12 September 2013, paras. 30 and 31 http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A-HRC-24-59_en.pdf, accessed 04 November 2013

³⁵⁵ UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Central African Republic: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 12 September 2013, para. 37 <http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/situation-human-rights-central-african-republic-report-united>, accessed 04 November 2013

detention conditions”. Bossembele was a military training camp in a bucolic area in which,

“[...] one of the houses had been turned into a prison dedicated to so-called political prisoners. Military members and civilians who were considered as dangerous were held there without trial.

They were maintained in total secrecy and had no possibility to communicate with their relatives who often believed they were dead or had disappeared for ever.”³⁵⁶

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 17 prisoners were liberated on 23 March 2013 by the Seleka forces who had headed to Bossembele military camp to gather military supplies the day before they seized Bangui. Prisoners were detained in a single 40 m² cell that hosted up to 35 persons. Former MP Herbert Djono-Ahaba (who became Minister of Mines in the Seleka government) who was detained for 3 months reported that killings occurred in the camp. CPJP member Yaya Issa who was detained for 2 years reported to have frequently been tortured and beaten. He stated that “A member of the Presidential Guard once beat me from night to morning: 240 blows with a military cord.” The guard later urinated on his wounds. Yaya Issa reported that he did not leave his cell at any time, nor did he wash himself during the first 4 months of his detention and remained in the same clothing. There was no toilet and prisoners had to defecate in the middle of the room. The guards later gave them a bucket. They were given one roll of maize or manioc a day. Yaya Issa reported,

“Were were hungry. Sometimes, to humiliate us the Presidential Guards (*‘gardes présidentiels’* – GPs) threw the roll in front of us and we were left with nothing.”³⁵⁷

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, former detainee Amadou Tidjani, who was a shop keeper, reported that they were sleeping on the floor or on cardboards. They almost never left the cell – only one would leave daily to take care of the bucket and get water. They were given 5 litres of water a day for the entire cell. Amadou Tidjani reported that the guards would kick prisoners or beat them with Kalashnikov. He witnessed at least five executions and stated,

“Sometimes they would take a prisoner out and beat him to death. I saw it happen with my own eyes.”³⁵⁸

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a captain shot Amadou Tidjani in the belly to scare him, and shot another prisoner in the foot. According to Amadou Tidjani, there was one French mercenary in the camp. Seleka Colonel Ali Garba, former member of the army, who had spent 3 months in Bossembele before being liberated in 2010, reported witnessing summary executions in the camp. Colonel Ali Garba stated,

³⁵⁶ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombele-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

³⁵⁷ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombele-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

³⁵⁸ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombelé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombele-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

“It was Bozize’s slaughterhouse. They would come in, take a soldier and kill him with a bullet. Two days would not go by without a new execution.”³⁵⁹

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Colonel Ali Garba reported that the soldiers who were killed were mainly those who withdrew when the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (“Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix”- CPJP) forces took Birao (north) in 2010.³⁶⁰

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, the former prisoners reported that the corpses were buried in the outskirts of the camp. Former detainee Amadou Tidjani reported that he recognised some former guards in the city of Bangui after his liberation and stated,

“Some were not that bad and would slip us some food. It was not their fault but that of Bozize.”³⁶¹

According to *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Colonel Ali Garba on the other hand asked that justice be done and that those who tortured him as well as Bozize be tried for their crimes.³⁶²

³⁵⁹ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombélé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombe-le-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

³⁶⁰ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombélé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombe-le-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

³⁶¹ Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombélé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombe-le-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013

³⁶² Le Nouvel Observateur, En Centrafrique, le camp de Bossombélé, théâtre des horreurs du régime Bozizé, 8 April 2013, <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20130408.AFP9108/en-centrafrique-le-camp-de-bossombe-le-theatre-des-horreurs-du-regime-bozize.html>, accessed 18 June 2013