



A CALL FOR SUSTAINED U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Nov. 30th, 2015

Two years ago, a coalition of NGOs [released a statement](#) urging a comprehensive U.S. Government strategy to help halt violence, protect civilians and prevent atrocities in the Central African Republic (CAR). As organizations that have made long-term commitments to advancing peace, protecting human rights, and alleviating suffering, we are grateful to the U.S. Government and the American people for efforts to prevent mass atrocities in the CAR. American contributions to humanitarian assistance, interreligious and community conflict resolution, diplomatic engagement, and peacekeeping have saved lives and prevented a worse crisis. The Pope’s visit to the CAR this past weekend provides an excellent opportunity to shine some light on the situation and reaffirm our commitment.

The CAR is at a critical time in its transition. A constitutional referendum is scheduled for December 13th. The referendum will be shortly followed by national elections, which usher in a new phase in the political transition and the return to democratic rule. Almost two million voters have registered to vote. Yet, risks are real. *Anti-Balaka* and *Ex-Seleka* militias have not been disarmed, and lawlessness still prevails in many areas. An estimated 860,000 people remain displaced, with nearly half a million outside the country. Violence and human rights abuses continue, with civilians bearing the primary brunt of ongoing insecurity. In some cases, humanitarian and peacebuilding activities have been limited by insecurity. Moreover, the recent crisis has its roots in a legacy of misrule, inequality, latent insecurity and social tensions that have never been adequately addressed.

The current crisis has cost thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of dollars. In order to consolidate gains, support the restoration of just and democratic governance, and support broad-based economic growth, continued commitment from the U.S. will be needed. To continue to ensure that this does not become a protracted crisis we urge the U.S. to commit to providing sustained diplomatic and financial support to:

1. Local, national and international partners in order to **accelerate Security Sector Reform (SSR), Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants** and continued assistance to security in LRA-affected areas. This includes engaging MINUSCA and *Sangaris* to fulfil their mandates during and after the electoral process.
2. Continuing and **institutionalizing locally-led conflict management and reconciliation initiatives** engaging religious, community, youth, women and civil society actors.
3. Efforts to **meet humanitarian needs, while building in the necessary flexibility and sustained funding to enable a transition to early recovery and development**. This includes the legal and sustainable Natural Resource Management.
4. Continuing to **support accountability processes**, including the recovery of the justice sector, national and international accountability mechanisms for abuses committed during the crisis, including illicit trade in natural resources.

Signed:

The Alliance for Peacebuilding
 Amnesty International USA
 Catholic Relief Services
 The Enough Project

The Friends Committee on National
 Legislation
 Invisible Children
 Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry
 Mercy Corps

Peace Direct
 The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative
 Search for Common Ground
 STAND
 Mark Schneider, Senior VP,
 International Crisis Group