



## Security Council briefing on MINUSCA, 21 February 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms. Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

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Thank you, President, and I also thank SRSR Rugwabiza for her comprehensive briefing. At the outset, we also pay tribute to MINUSCA peacekeepers who were recently killed and injured on duty.

President

MINUSCA's renewal last November prompted a collective agreement to reassess priorities within the mission's mandate, including the support for the extension of State Authority.

Malta welcomes recent collaborative efforts, as reflected by the deployment of civil servants by the CAR Government in regions assisted by MINUSCA, along with the initiation of ambitious programmes by the World Bank.



Lasting peace and stability in CAR is our shared objective. Accompanying this goal is an inclusive political space which is preserved. This is an essential precondition.

As the dry season persists, armed group activities are on the rise, accompanied by transhumance movements and related clashes. We condemn activities by armed groups, and are deeply concerned by violations committed. These include kidnappings aimed at regaining control of mining sites. We are alarmed that during this reporting period there was a 30% increase in human rights violations and abuses.

Malta commends MINUSCA's efforts in engaging with militias to prevent the recruitment and use of children, as well as other grave violations. At the same time, we fully support initiatives aimed at preventing sexual and gender-based violence, including forced marriage, and sexual slavery.



We also commend the CAR Government's completion of a ten-year action plan to operationalise the national border management policy. This is a significant milestone in limiting international illegal trafficking movements, and encouraging the authorities to continue engaging constructively in good neighbourly relations.

We should also address the impacts of the conflict in Sudan on CAR. The influx of refugees is exacerbating the burdens faced by local communities. This, coupled with security risks faced by humanitarian aid workers, makes us deeply worried of an increasingly tense situation that is affecting the precarious tri-border region.

With almost half of the population requiring some form of humanitarian assistance, with needs exacerbated by the adverse impact of climate change and food insecurity, we recall the need to have aid responses adequately resourced.

President



MINUSCA's freedom of movement and action remain a vital component of its mandate. Despite renewed coordination between authorities and MINUSCA, the restriction on the use of drones is unacceptable. It poses a deliberate threat to the safety and security of peacekeepers. Unmanned aerial vehicles are important for patrolling areas in advance of MINUSCA patrols.

On this occasion, we urge the Secretariat to share, in a timely manner, the Human Rights report later this year. This aligns with the recent resolution and ensures that members of this Council have all the necessary elements before engaging in negotiations.

In closing, President, we continue to support CAR's renewed efforts to engage in political dialogue. We encourage authorities to maintain this momentum, prioritising inclusive local elections and expanding necessary civic space.

We commend the adoption of gender quotas and other efforts to increase the meaningful participation of women.



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These efforts, alongside continued cooperation with MINUSCA, are fundamental pillars for the extension of State Authority and, consequently, the long-lasting stabilisation of the country.

I thank you.