

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
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CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC (CAR)



MAIN STORIES

An Unsettled Political
Environment

The Rebels

Russia

Humanitarian
Situation

HIGHLIGHTS

- President Faustin-Archange Touadéra was sworn in for a second five-year term on 30 March 2021, vowing to eliminate armed groups and attract investment. Touadéra said that a national dialogue aimed to ease political tensions would start soon. It is however unlikely that the Coalition of Patriots for Change (CPC) and former President Francois Bozizé would be invited to the dialogue table.
- While Touadéra has been sworn in for a second and last term in office, his United Hearts Movement (MCU) is already looking for a successor. Prime Minister Firmin Ngrébada allegedly has Russian support. Another strong contender is former Prime Minister Simplice Mathieu Sarandji.
- Former President Bozizé, had reportedly taken charge of the CPC. Christian Guenebem was appointed as interim president of the Kwa na Kwa (KNK), as Bozizé stepped down from the leadership of his party.
- One of the most powerful of the Central African Republic's armed groups, the Unity for Peace in Central Africa (UPC), led by Ali Darassa, said it would quit the CPC. The government would however not hold negotiations with the UPC, Ange Maxime Kazagui, a spokesman for the government, said.
- The Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation (3R) announced that its leader, Sidiki Abass, had died from wounds suffered during an attack.
- Martin Ziguélé, the leader of the Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People (MLPC) and Karim Meckassoua, former president of the National Assembly, were banned from leaving the country. Anicet Georges Dologuélé, the leader of the Party for Central African Renewal (URCA) was also prevented from leaving the country for France for health reasons. Touadéra reportedly



instructed that all politicians contact the Ministry of the Interior to be authorised to leave the country before his inauguration.

- The Office of the National Assembly, on 13 April 2021, declared that the request for the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of Ziguélé, Dologuélé, Meckassoua and Member of Parliament (MP), Aurélien Zingas, representing the Meckassoua's Le Chemin de l'Espérance movement, submitted by the interim Minister of Justice, Arnaud Djoubaye Abazène, is admissible.
- On 12 April, the 28-29 Collective, Galaxy and TalithaKoum Centrafrique civil society organisations, belonging to the MCU, stage a protest against any initiative aimed at dialogue with rebels.
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has called on the authorities to restore access to two news websites that they have been blocking since mid-February. Corbeau News and Le Tsunami were given no warning when the ministry of posts and telecommunications instructed Internet operators on 16 February to cut access to their websites, reportedly on the instruction of Russian officials because of their reporting on the Wagner mercenaries.
- The United Nations (UN) Working Group on mercenaries said it was concerned by the proximity and interoperability between Russian mercenaries of the Wagner Group and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The experts also received, and continue to receive, reports of grave human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, attributable to the private military personnel.
- The representative of the UN Secretary General in the Central African Republic, Mankeur Ndiaye, said that military operations by Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and their allies remained key to regaining full control over the country.
- The Russian ambassador to CAR, Vladimir Titorenko, warned Bozizé that he only has two choices: surrender or be neutralised.

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Titorenko further accused Dologuélé of colluding with the CPC and Chad of not supporting the government of CAR.

- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that as of 31 March, 738 279 people were internally displaced.
- In the Central African Republic, pre-electoral violence flared up, exposing women and girls to threats and heightened risks of sexual violence, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), from 3 January 2020 to 14 April 2021, there were 5 465 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 74 deaths.
- The United States (US) Department of State said in its 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices that significant human rights issues in CAR included: unlawful or arbitrary killings by government security forces; torture by security forces; enforced disappearances or abductions, torture and physical abuses or punishment.
- Amnesty international said in its 2020/21 report that armed groups continued to commit war crimes and other human rights abuses, including killings, sexual violence against civilians and attacks against humanitarian workers.
- During March 2021, there were 53 security incidents affecting humanitarian workers, far exceeding the incidents monthly average of 2020.
- Achille Modjokossa, the sub-prefect of Ouadda, in April 2021, called on government to deploy security forces to the city, which he alleged had been overrun by rebels as well as “Sudanese criminals”.
- FACA and its allies (Rwandan troops and Russian mercenaries) took over Kaga-Bandoro in Nana-Grébizi Prefecture on 10 April 2021. Kaga-Bandoro hosts the largest cattle market in CAR, which

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makes it a strategic city, especially as the taxation of cattle is an important source of income for armed groups.

- 3R rebels returned to Ngaoundaye in Ouham-Péndé prefecture in April 2021 and according to residents, the city has been plunged into total insecurity.
- The African Development Bank said in its 2021 African Economic Outlook that the economy grew 0.4% in 2020, compared with 4.5% in 2019. It projects real GDP growth of 3.3% in 2021 and 5.1% in 2022.
- In a phone call with Touadéra, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Russia was ready to continue assisting its efforts to stabilise the situation in the country, including in its role of a permanent member of the UN Security Council.



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