

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

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CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC (CAR)



MAIN STORIES

Dialogue

New President
of the National
Assembly

Russian Abuses

France

Chad

ICGLR Meeting

Humanitarian
Situation

HIGHLIGHTS

- The government, on 19 April 2021, launched a consultation process with the opposition but the 2020 Democratic Opposition Coalition (COD-2020) said it would boycott consultations and dialogue and called for an inclusive process involving armed groups.
- Former Prime Minister Simplicie Mathieu Sarandji, a close ally of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, was elected as President of the National Assembly, replacing Moussa Laurent Gon-Baba.
- There is reportedly increased public anger because Prime Minister Firmin Ngrebada has not yet resigned and Touadéra has done nothing to dismiss him. It is alleged that Ngrebada indicated that he would not budge from the Prime Minister's office because he has the support of his "Russian Wagner friends".
- The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) will provide logistical and security support for the holding of the next legislative elections on 23 May 2021, in the 49 electoral constituencies where seats are not yet filled.
- The government described United Nations (UN) information about abuses by CAR troops and Russian mercenaries as "denunciations", but promised to investigate them.
- A new investigation by [Radio France Internationale](#) (RFI) describes human rights violations, committed by CAR troops together with their Russian allies, including 26 extrajudicial executions and five rapes, between January 1 and mid-April 2021.
- In May 2021, following the assassination of the head of the Kaga-Bandoro cattle market, Mahamat Zène Abrass, by Wagner mercenaries, some soldiers began to open up about atrocities committed by the Russians.

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- On 16 April, three soldiers were killed in an ambush about 25 km from Gabal on the border with Sudan by Missiria, a Sudanese armed group.
- Rebels of the Unit for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) arrived in the town of Zémio on 22 April and proceeded to destroy houses in the city centre. On 29 April, an incursion of several dozen rebels of the UPC was reported in the village of Pavika. Several people were murdered.
- A vehicle belonging to the Catholic Mission of Niem, Nana-Mambéré Prefecture, hit a landmine on 5 May 2021, killing one employee and injuring two others.
- A French national, Juan Remy Quignolot, believed to be a mercenary, was arrested on 10 May 2021 with a large weapons cache.
- At least 600 ex-combatants, who were trained and incorporated into the ranks of the armed forces after their disarmament and demobilisation have deserted.
- The French defence council's mid-April meeting was exclusively focused on the CAR and discussed the rise in “anti-French” campaigns in that country.
- French President Emmanuel Macron had a tense conversation with Touadéra on the phone over “anti-French” campaigns. Touadéra denies all responsibility but Macron claimed several of his closest advisors were involved.
- Since the installation of the Transitional Military Council (CMT) in Chad on 20 April, the Central African intelligence services have been paying particular attention to new Chadian strong man Mahamat Idriss Déby, who allegedly has family relations with the rebel Coalition des Patriotes pour le Changement (CPC's) influential spokesman, Abakar Sabone.

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- The political and security situation in CAR was the focus for Heads of States who attended a mini-summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), in Luanda on 20 April 2021 under the auspices of Angolan President João Lourenço. He appealed to the rebel forces and the opposition in CAR to contribute to the normalisation of the situation in the country.
- The Dutch daily Algemeen Dagblad (AD) has provided some details on the closure of the economic mission of the Central African Republic in Brussels on suspicion of money laundering.
- The World Bank said in its April 2021 Economic Report that CAR's economy stagnated in 2020. Real GDP growth is projected at 0.7% in 2021 – 2.5 percentage points below initial projections before the December 2020 elections.
- According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF's) latest estimates, at least 168 000 children were forced to flee their homes by widespread violence in the run-up to and following general elections in December 2020. 370 000 children are now internally displaced because of ongoing violence and insecurity. This is the highest level of child displacement in the country since 2014.
- Heavy rain plunged the entire Bangui into darkness for weeks and made water an even scarcer commodity.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), from 3 January 2020 to 11 May 2021, there were 6 674 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 93 deaths.
- Russia could invest \$11 billion in reconstruction projects in CAR, according to Pascal Bida Koyagbé, CAR's minister in charge of strategic investments.
- Facebook announced the take-down of 32 pages, 46 profiles and six Instagram accounts operated by individuals whose activities targeted audiences in CAR. Suspended pages

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consistently disparaged France's involvement with CAR but praised Touadéra and Russia.

- United States (US) President, Joe Biden, on 6 May 2021, issued a statement on the "Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to the Central African Republic" for another year because the situation "continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States".
- The Minister of Mines and Geology, Léopold Mbolli-Fatran met with the Ambassador of South Africa stationed in CAR, Bonisiwa Ramalebana, to discuss mining exploration.
- Dyck Advisory Group (DAG) has submitted a bid to participate in a mine clearance project in CAR being run by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).



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