



MAIN STORIES

**New Prime Minister,
Old Cabinet, Same
Politics**

The Russians

**Luanda Roadmap:
Going Nowhere**

Humanitarian Situation

HIGHLIGHTS

- President Faustin Archange Touadéra dismissed Henri-Marie Dondra as prime minister, replacing him with Economy Minister, Félix Moloua, who is regarded as a close friend of Touadéra. Moloua is to retain his ministry while the rest of the cabinet line-up remains the same.
- The Russian mercenaries are not satisfied with the fact that the cabinet remains unchanged. They reportedly hoped to see the Minister of Finance and Budget, Hervé Ndoba, out of office because he cancelled a deal on the collection of custom duties by the Wagner Group; and the Minister of justice and the Promotion of Human Rights, Arnaud Djoubane-Abazene, for making public the report of the government on human rights abuses by the mercenaries.
- On 10 February Dondra submitted his letter of resignation from the ruling United Hearts Movement (MCU).
- Under pressure from the international community, Touadéra decided to exclude the Minister of Livestock and Animal Health and also the Political Coordinator of the Unite pour la Paix en Centrafrique (UPC) rebel group, Ali Hassan Boubba, from the Council of Ministers. As a result, Boubba is not participating in government activities, but he retains his ministerial position in name, now focusing on disarmament activities.
- The Republican Dialogue Organising Committee announced that a dialogue will take place at the end of March, without the participation of rebel groups.
- After its withdrawal in October 2021 from the national reconciliation process, the opposition is returning to the negotiating table, following the cancellation of the procedure for the lifting of parliamentary immunity of Martin Ziguelé, president of the Central African People's Liberation Movement (MLPC), Anicet Georges Dologuelé, president of the Union for Central African Renewal (URCA) and deputy Aurélien Simplicie Zingas.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- The President of the National Electoral Authority (ANE), Barthelemy Mathias Mourouba, announced the date of 11 September 2022 for the holding of municipal elections, the first in over 30 years.
- Some Members of Parliament (MPs) close to the MCU and the opposition initiated a petition for the dismissal of Simplicie Mathieu Sarandji as President of the National Assembly for “forgery and aggravated corruption.”
- The French intelligence services throughout 2021 documented the main abuses attributed to Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and the Wagner Group. More than 200 cases of abuse have been recorded since December 2020, including looting, theft, illegal occupation of homes, arbitrary arrests, torture, rape and summary executions.
- The United Nations (UN) is investigating an alleged massacre near the town of Bria, Haute-Kotto Prefecture, which reportedly saw between 30 and 70 civilians killed by Russian mercenaries and FACA on 16 and 17 January 2022. Albert Yaloké Mokpeme, Touadéra’s spokesperson denied the reports that the Russian mercenaries and FACA forces carried out the massacre. Mokpeme accused foreign media of orchestrating such a report.
- It is alleged that more than 90 civilians were massacred by Russian mercenaries in various localities in Bria on the Ouadda highway on 9 February 2022.
- On 12 February, the leader of the Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), Zakaria Damane, his brother, and 20 of his combatants were killed by Russian mercenaries in Ouadda village, located in Haute-Kotto Prefecture. Damane was reportedly a pillar in the disarmament and demobilisation process of rebels in the region of Sam-Ouandja.
- Local sources claim Russian mercenaries use FACA soldiers as house helps, adding that any FACA soldier that disobeys their Russian masters are often flogged or abducted to hideouts where they are tortured.



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



- Wagner, which has been looking for several months for a strategy to replenish its cash flow, is now targeting the taxation of agricultural products for export, particularly coffee.
- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that violence in the CAR had ushered in new conflict dynamics in 2021. New threats have emerged, such as explosive devices, new actors have entered the scene, areas previously spared have spilled into violence and frontlines have shifted. In 2022, 3.1 million people – 63% of the population, need humanitarian assistance and protection, a level not seen in five years.
- CAR is ranked 154 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI: 1=clean; 180=highly corrupt). CAR was ranked 146 out of 180 countries in 2020.
- The World Bank said in its January 2022 Global Economic Prospects (GEP) that growth is projected at 3.5% in 2022, up from 2.8% predicted in June 2021. Growth is projected at 4.5% in 2023, up from 4.4% in June 2021.
- On 26 January, Sudan shut its land border with CAR in what officials said was an attempt to manage a security threat from the country. It is alleged that Russian mercenaries together with Touadéra, Sudanese First Vice President Mahamat Hamdan Dagalo, the leader of a Sudanese militia called Damassari and certain Chadian rebel groups are planning the overthrow of Chad's President General Idriss Mahamat Deby.
- The European Union (EU) would resume FACA training if they were not "employed" by Wagner, Vice Admiral Hervé Bléjean, Director General of the European Union Military Staff, on a visit to Bangui said.
- It is alleged that at the request of Touadéra, a meeting took place between him and the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan in the Ethiopian capital Addis-Ababa. The objective was to persuade the ICC not to open a new investigation into the atrocities committed by Wagner.

