

Peace and Security Council Report

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Peace and Security Council Protocol

'The PSC shall encourage non-governmental organizations to participate actively in the efforts aimed at promoting peace, security and stability in Africa. When required such organizations may be invited to address the Peace and Security Council' – Article 20 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC of the African Union

Early warning issues for April 2013

During April the developing situations in the CAR and Mali will require close attention, as will events in Egypt, particularly in view of the approaching legislative elections. Ongoing fighting in Mali and sporadic attacks against government forces and installations in Libya need to be monitored closely. Also, despite their much reduced profiles, the terrorist

threats still presented by Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Kenya and Somalia and al-Qada in the Maghreb are ever present, so continuing vigilance is essential. Threats to food security, as a result of locust plagues that have been reported in a number of African countries, including Egypt and Madagascar, are also cause for concern.

► Current PSC Chair

Bio data: H.E. Joram Mukama Biswaro
Current posts: Tanzania's Ambassador to Ethiopia
Permanent Representative to the AU and UNECA
and Chair of the PSC

Egypt

The roots of the current Egyptian political crisis are manifold. Egypt still has no elected parliament, the problems in the Sinai are escalating, the police apparatus waits to be

reformed and the independence of the judiciary needs to be consolidated. The army seems to be sending ambiguous messages that instability will not be tolerated, yet disruptive protests and demonstrations continue.

Livingstone formula

'Civil Society Organizations may provide technical support to the African Union by undertaking early warning reporting, and situation analysis which feeds information into the decision-making process of the PSC' – PSC/PR/ (CLX), 5 December 2008, Conclusions of a Retreat of the PSC on a mechanism of interaction between the Council and CSOs.

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Additionally, the economic and social difficulties of the population are mounting.

Due to unprecedented political turmoil, strikes and sporadic violence, the Egyptian economy faces persistent economic challenges. Food prices have risen, tourism, a key component of the Egyptian economy, has dramatically dropped and potential investors' confidence has plummeted. According to the Central Bank of Egypt, monthly inflation in January 2013 was up 1,7 per cent while the annual inflation rate has reached 6,3 per cent. To worsen the situation, Egyptian nationals have pulled their money and investments out of the country, causing the country's financial accounts to dip to a deficit of 1,3 billion in 2011–2012.

Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau has been experiencing cycles of political crisis since its independence in 1974. The coup of 12 April 2012 that interrupted both the ongoing presidential elections and constitutional order was the latest in a series of such events. Key issues with regard to the stabilisation of the country revolve around the power of the armed forces to impose or remove civilian authorities depending on their own interests, as well as the manipulation of the armed forces by political leaders and vice versa.

CAR

The latest rebel attack and their subsequent control of the capital of the Central African Republic (CAR) has put the nation, with its long history of instability, in a state of uncertainty about its future. According to the United Nations (UN) the conflict has isolated much of the population of this impoverished country, multiplying suffering. In the absence of meaningful international action the current situation could deteriorate further. There are reports of widespread 'rape, looting (and) recruitment of children'. The conflict

has also restricted humanitarian access to refugees and resulted in over 175 000 internally displaced persons. The past weeks have also witnessed a surge in the number of civilians fleeing the CAR conflict to neighbouring countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Chad. There are currently 1,5 million people in the country who need assistance, and the latest fighting will likely increase that number unless the situation improves and aid workers are allowed to reach those affected.

Country analysis

EGYPT

Previous PSC and AU Communiqués

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its CCLX (260th) meeting held on 16 February 2011, took note of the deep aspirations of the Egyptian people, especially its youth, for change and the opening of the political space in order to be able to democratically establish and designate institutions that are truly representative and respectful of human rights and freedoms. The PSC expressed the AU's solidarity with the Egyptian people, whose desire for democracy is consistent with the relevant instruments of the AU and the continent's commitment to promoting democratisation, good governance and respect for human rights. It strongly condemned acts of violence against the demonstrators, which led to the loss of human life. The PSC also requested the Egyptian authorities to shed light on such acts of violence and to bring their authors and perpetrators to justice. The PSC

reserved the right, in the light of developments in the transition process and on the basis of the relevant AU instruments, to take any measure that the situation might warrant, with due respect for the legitimate aspirations of the Egyptian people.

Crisis escalation potential

Following the January 2013 death sentences imposed on 21 Egyptians from Port Said accused of being responsible for the deaths of 74 football fans last year in Port Said, violent demonstrations and looting occurred in the same city. This verdict had already led to violent demonstrations and riots and the deaths of more than 40 people. In Cairo, supporters who were unhappy with the verdict and the clearing of many policemen set fire to a police station as well as the headquarters of the Egyptian football federation.

In Port Said, some protestors went so far as to proclaim the independence of their city. Two policemen were condemned to 15 years in prison while seven others were not convicted. The police have been severely criticised for their passivity, which led to the deaths of the football fans last year. Many

Egyptians believe that former President Hosni Mubarak's sympathisers are behind all the demonstrations in order to stir up tension across the country.

The violent protests led President Mohamed Morsi to call upon the army to assist the police force. Following the riots, the police force of Port Said was obliged to allow its building to be taken over and secured by the army. Various buildings of the Muslim Brotherhood were looted and burnt while the number of riots and strikes across the country continued to increase.

The ongoing violence has added to a very difficult economic situation and complicates an already difficult political transition process. The violence may also jeopardise the organisation of the legislative elections, which are intended to take place during the period of April-June 2013.

Key issues and internal dynamics

The roots of the current Egyptian political crisis are manifold. Egypt still has no elected parliament, the problems in the Sinai are escalating, the police apparatus waits to be reformed and the independence of the judiciary needs to be

consolidated. The army seems to be sending ambiguous messages that instability will not be tolerated, yet disruptive protests and demonstrations continue.

Additionally, the economic and social difficulties of the population are mounting.

The riots in Port Said also put under the spotlight the suspected ambiguous role of the police. Many Egyptian journalists have underlined that there is a tendency by many members of the police force, including officers, who despise President Morsi, to obstruct the president's policies and by doing so to worsen the political situation. Moreover, the police have been accused of orchestrating the violence in order to feed the instability.

Following the demonstration in front of the Muslim Brotherhood building, President Morsi threatened opposition political leaders as well as the perpetrators that he would act in the most appropriate way. For the opposition, this clearly indicated that he was not the president of all Egyptians, but of the Muslim Brotherhood only.

President Morsi is facing increasing difficulties and opposition from not only the population and the opposition parties, but also from within his own party, the Muslim Brotherhood. From within, it has been argued that behind the scenes, the Majless al-Rashad led by businessman Khayrat Al-shater dictates Egyptian policy to President Morsi.

Additionally, since the Parliament was dissolved and President Morsi was elected, the Salafists of the Nour party have not had any ministerial portfolio. Consequently, a budding political divide is coming between the Salafists and the Muslim Brotherhood. A growing fringe of Nour sympathisers is also calling for the resignation of the current government. However, the Nour party is also divided due to the difficulty of agreeing about what

strategy to adopt vis à vis their political engagement, as their refusal to engage in politics was for a long time their credo and philosophy.

Furthermore, the decision last November by President Morsi to control the powers of the three divisions of government, the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches, sparked unrest and discontent across the country. This decision also led his political opponent and the former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mohammed Al-Baradei, to denounce President Morsi's ambition and nickname the president the new pharaoh. As a result, President Morsi's decision, and the current instability across the country, has led different political leaders, among them the Nasserist Hamdin Sabbahi, Al-Baradei and the former Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, to form the National Salvation Front (NSF or Jabha Al Inqad Watanee). Only Abdel Moneim Aboul Foutouh, who had achieved a fourth place result in the presidential election, refused to become allied with any party, especially with members of the old Mubarak regime. Against all odds, even the Nour Islamist party has decided to support this opposition alliance against the Muslim Brotherhood.

However, despite the fact that the Salafists of Nour and the NSF have joined forces to demand a change of government, the Nour party and the Muslim Brotherhood are likely to continue to remain closer on the constitution while the secular opposition and the Muslim Brotherhood might find common ground in resisting the more hardline-religious legislative approach of the Salafists, albeit for very different reasons. Furthermore, this ungainly and inharmonious opposition is not coherently structured and often consists of *feloul* – people belonging to the former corrupt regime of Mubarak.

The opposition also demands a new electoral law that would essentially ensure a fairer distribution of seats between the various voting districts as well as address the under-representation of women. Members of the opposition are also calling for legal guarantees and international supervision of the next elections to ensure that no fraud will occur, as well as for the installation of a new government composed of technocrats.

However, the opposition, which initially mobilised itself against President Morsi's constitutional declaration, has slowly become more vehement in its opposition to the Egyptian president in order to challenge his elected legitimacy and, in doing so, to insist upon impossible conditions for any dialogue with the government. Also, if such a political conundrum remains, with the sympathisers of the old regime of Mubarak resorting to trickery and subterfuge in order to sabotage the current government's political endeavours, it could have serious and negative repercussions for the future of Egypt. If not conducive to the onset of civil war, this situation could allow and facilitate the return of the *feloul* to the forefront of Egyptian politics.

Consequently, there is a desperate need for the opposition and the Islamists to work out a comprehensive political deal together, even though such an agreement might not be acceptable to their respective popular support bases. However, this approach could resolve some of the major problems behind the current deadlock and, in doing so, stop or at least slow down the dangerous downward spiral the country is currently experiencing.

Therefore, the current situation may indicate that not only will the transition process be difficult and painful, but that neither the Muslim Brotherhood nor the opposition can totally eliminate one another. This impasse may also mean that only a

compromise can lead to the consolidation of the political transition and, very importantly, the prevention of sympathisers of the old regime taking over the reins of government in Egypt.

Since the last elections, the Muslim Brotherhood has begun to face growing rejection by the Egyptian population. It's increasingly perceived as cynical, being involved in political intrigues and tricks and more concerned with the interests of its own organisation than the country's fate. Even the Salafists criticise it vehemently, accusing it of trying to use religion to oppress, despise and humiliate the population. The fact that the Muslim Brotherhood compromised with the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (CSAF) throughout 2011 also works against it, although both parties initially understood that this union was for the good of the Egyptian people and that they had to work hand-in-hand together.

Furthermore, it increasingly appears that the Muslim Brotherhood has little political experience, especially in the management and exercise of power. The Muslim Brotherhood has difficulties in re-adjusting and adapting to the wider world of secular affairs and the arena of political debate. In addition, its defensive attitude is fueled by concerns and fears that forces of the old Mubarak regime are still present and would do anything to bring it down.

Due to unprecedented political turmoil, strikes and sporadic violence, the Egyptian economy faces persistent economic challenges. Food prices have risen, tourism, a key component of the Egyptian economy, has dramatically dropped and potential investors' confidence has plummeted. According to the Central Bank of Egypt, monthly inflation in January 2013 was up 1,7 per cent while the annual inflation rate has reached 6,3 per cent. To worsen the situation, Egyptian nationals have pulled their money and investments

out of the country, causing the country's financial accounts to dip to a deficit of 1,3 billion in 2011–2012.

Despite financial aid received from neighbouring Arab Gulf states, especially Qatar, Cairo still needs a more sustainable response to its economic challenges. With significant military ties to Egypt, the United States (US) is the most obvious potential ally capable of leveraging diplomatic and financial influence in order to help Egypt stabilise its economy. This dire economic situation would put Egypt under more pressure to achieve an accommodation with the US interests in the region.

On 25 November 2012, Cairo's stock exchange lost the equivalent of \$5 billion, equal to the loan the Egyptian government had been expecting from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). An IMF approval could make it possible for Egypt to attract much-needed direct investment and portfolio investors. Although the IMF is unlikely to require major structural changes that would further exacerbate political destabilisation, the Muslim Brotherhood-led government must nonetheless determine what adjustments it can politically afford. The government may have to take some unpopular decisions with regard to subsidy reforms, pound devaluation and flotation, which could render the Muslim Brotherhood even more unpopular.

The ongoing political turmoil and deep economic crisis in Egypt is hurting the country's most vulnerable communities, with refugees being at the top of the list. While struggling to feed themselves and pay their rent, migrants and refugees in Egypt have frequently become the victims of unprovoked arrests and disappearances. Many migrants and refugees complain that, since the fall of Mubarak, life in Egypt for them has deteriorated from bad to worse. The poor economic situation does not facilitate any hope for these communities and as a result

they find it increasingly difficult to earn a living or even lead a dignified life.

Furthermore, this acute economic situation facilitates and creates all kinds of illegal trafficking and exploitation. There are alarming signs of organ theft and trafficking, and refugees have become particularly vulnerable to this kind of exploitation. Human kidneys, tissues, uteruses, ovaries and many other body parts now feature high on the list to satisfy the demand for stolen organs.

Additionally, many refugees, especially Syrian women, have become the prey of Egyptian men who take advantage of their desperate situation to propose marriage, claiming that they will help the women and their families. Very often, vulnerable refugee women see marriage as their only means of survival. No doubt, in other neighbouring Arab countries receiving Syrian refugees the same situation arises.

This dramatic situation has exacerbated an imbalance of power based on gender roles, which can be compared to exploitation or modern slavery. Often, wealthy Arabs, including Egyptians, choose vulnerable young girls, often under-age girls, promising them and their respective families that they will marry them and give them a better life. At the end of 2012, it was estimated that the Syrian community in Egypt totalled close to 100 000. As of January 2013, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were 35 180 African refugees officially registered in Egypt, as well as 15 000 Syrian refugees and asylum seekers.

Geopolitical dynamics

Africa and RECs

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, has expressed her concerns about the current political crisis in Egypt that led to massive demonstrations in Suez City, Port

Said, Ismailiya and Cairo, and had resulted in many casualties.

In this regard, the AU regretted the loss of human lives in Egypt and called on all Egyptian stakeholders to exercise restraint, voice their grievances through peaceful means, and work towards consensus-building for the resolution of all the problems facing their country. Dr Dlamini-Zuma expressed her encouragement following the meeting organised by the Azhar Institution on 31 January 2013, which assembled various figures from the opposition, the ruling party and the Coptic Church. For Dr Dlamini-Zuma, the agreed resolutions, particularly the rejection of violence, and the need to protect public and private property, as well as a commitment to engage in a national dialogue, are positive steps in the right direction.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma further highlighted the pressing need for Egyptian stakeholders to engage in constructive dialogue in order to overcome their differences and rise above partisan and ideological considerations to ensure that Egypt moves forward in a peaceful and consensual atmosphere.

Finally, the Chairperson reiterated the readiness of the AU to contribute in any other possible way to facilitate this process.

United Nations

On behalf of the UN Secretary-General, and marking the second anniversary of their revolution, a UN spokesperson extended the Secretary-General's warmest wishes to the Egyptians and reiterated the commitment of the UN to support the Egyptian people and government in their efforts to build a more inclusive and democratic future.

He said the Secretary-General encouraged Egyptians to remain committed to the universal principles of peaceful dialogue and

non-violence, inclusiveness, respect for human rights and the independence of institutions, as well as democratic processes that would be accommodating of a diversity of viewpoints. He also underscored the Secretary-General's view on the importance of the active participation of women in decision-making.

The spokesperson said that the Secretary-General believed these aims were the foundations that could provide the stable, hopeful and dignified future for which the Egyptian people had struggled so courageously in their revolution.

International community

The High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Catherine Ashton, indicated that she had followed the referendum on the draft Constitution on 15 and 22 December 2012 very closely and she welcomed the peaceful and orderly environment that prevailed during the vote. She also took note of the majority voting in favour of the Constitution, as well as the turnout of 33 per cent.

Given the continuing need for consensus-building and inclusion, Ashton reiterated her previous calls for dialogue among all parties in Egypt in order to make further progress toward deep and sustainable democracy. She urged those concerned, in particular the President, to intensify efforts in this regard. As a close partner of the EU, Ashton wanted to stress the EU's support for Egypt's democratic transition.

Scenarios

Given the above analysis, the following scenarios are possible:

Scenario 1

Egypt remains unstable and serious differences prevail among the population and the various political parties. Insecurity across the

country may soon become a major challenge for the Egyptian authorities. The population is increasingly unhappy and the ongoing difficult socio-economic situation makes the political transition more complex. The scenario of a civil war in Egypt cannot be ruled out. In the event of a civil war, the first beneficiaries would be the *feloul*, the sympathisers of the former regime of Mubarak, or even the army.

Scenario 2

Egypt remains unstable for many months. Egyptian society is divided and two years after the fall of Mubarak is still seeking compromises and the successful creation of a new Egypt. This instability and uncertainty could well be a threat to the ongoing political transition in the country.

Scenario 3

Strong pressures from the street, the opposition, the Salafists and the army will remain on the government. This could lead to further clashes and divisions across the country. The growing pressure emanating from the Salafists whose base does not feel the existing constitution is Islamic enough may further increase pressure on the government, and on Egyptian society as well.

Scenario 4

Despite mounting pressure from both the opposition and the street, the Muslim Brotherhood may attempt to hold onto power until the scheduled parliamentary elections take place in April-June 2013. In doing so, and in the event it does well in the parliamentary elections, the Muslim Brotherhood would effectively confirm its political dominance in parliament, which would enable it to argue that the ballot boxes have effectively settled the wider political debate. However, if the opposition decides to boycott the coming elections, the country could become even more polarised and unstable.

Options

Given the above scenarios, the following options could be considered by the PSC to consolidate democracy in Egypt:

Option 1

The PSC could call for an investigation into the recent violence and claims of abuse in order to hold the perpetrators accountable and to also appease tension within the population.

Option 2

The PSC could call for the establishment of a national council for dialogue, comprising Egypt's main political and civil society organisations as well as the army, to agree on a clear and feasible roadmap that will take the transition forward in a peaceful manner.

Option 3

The PSC could encourage the opposition and the Salafists (and the Muslim Brotherhood) to work

out an acceptable and viable compromise.

Option 4

The PSC could consider calling upon the religious authorities of Al Azhar to actively engage in a dialogue with leaders of civil society and the government, in order to promote concrete ideas that would enable the Salafists and other religious groups to engage comfortably with the modern contemporary and secular world.

Country analysis

GUINEA-BISSAU

Introduction

The last country analysis on Guinea-Bissau was published in the April 2012 edition of the Peace and Security Council Report. The present analysis covers developments that occurred between April 2012 and March 2013. Readers interested in previous events are invited to consult the April 2012 issue.

Previous PSC AU Communiqués and Statements

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (PSC-AU) held its 361st meeting on 22 March 2013 in order to discuss the situation in Guinea Bissau following the joint mission undertaken by the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN), from 16 to 21 December 2012. At the meeting, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) welcomed 'the participation of the main political parties in the Transition and

(encouraged) the President of the Transition to accelerate the elaboration of the Roadmap for the Transition for adoption by the National People's Assembly as soon as possible'.

During its 351st meeting held on 16 January 2013, the PSC noted with satisfaction not only 'the positive contribution of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) to the stabilization of the situation and the promotion of confidence, as well as the financial assistance provided in support of security sector reform (SSR) and other activities in the country' but also 'the progress made by the parties of Guinea Bissau, especially the agreement reached by political parties to re-launch the functioning of the Parliament, extend the mandate of Members of Parliament till the end of the Transition and to allocate vacant positions in Parliament to the major political party which resumed its activities in Parliament, towards promoting consensus and inclusiveness, in order to ensure a successful transition'.

At its 327th meeting held on 14 July 2012, the PSC encouraged ECOWAS 'to pursue its efforts, in close coordination with the other relevant international actors,

notably the CPLP, the AU, the UN and the EU, towards the implementation of the decisions relating to the return to constitutional order in Guinea Bissau' and commended 'the Government of the Republic of Angola for the role played by the Angolan Technical Military and Security Mission in Guinea Bissau (*Missão de Segurança de Angola na Guiné-Bissau-MISSANG*)', which withdrew in June, and encouraged it 'to continue its contribution to the process for a way out from the crisis'.

The PSC, at its 319th meeting held at ministerial level, on 24 April 2012, reaffirmed 'the principles of subsidiarity and, in this respect, endorsed the decisions of ECOWAS, in particular the deployment of a stabilization mission', welcomed 'the commitment and dynamism of ECOWAS in dealing with the crisis in Guinea Bissau', and expressed 'its support to the mediation conducted by the Republic of Guinea'.

On 17 April 2012, the PSC, at its 318th meeting, decided, in conformity with the relevant AU instruments, to 'suspend, with immediate effect, the participation of Guinea Bissau in all activities of the African Union until the effective

restoration of constitutional order'. This decision followed the coup d'état perpetrated on 12 April 2012 just before the election run-off planned for 29 April 2012.

Crisis escalation potential

The coup of April 2012 in Guinea-Bissau has once again revealed the difficult relationships within the political class and between the military and civilian powers. A number of issues threaten the stability of post-coup Guinea-Bissau, particularly with regard to the difficult political transition that should lead to the holding of elections, the divisions within the international community on the management of the crisis and the precarious socio-economic situation of the country.

The political class in Guinea-Bissau remains deeply divided over the ongoing transition process. The signing of the Political Agreement and the Pact of Transition on 17 January 2013 by Manuel Saturnino da Costa, the first vice president of the African Party for the Independence for Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC), which was negotiated under the auspices of ECOWAS, may seem to be a positive development. However, it more likely reveals internal divisions within the PAIGC. Indeed, Carlos Gomes Junior, president of the party, is in exile in Portugal. He is considered by the junta as the instigator of the failed coup of 21 October 2012 and his immediate return to Guinea-Bissau appears unlikely.

Manual Sherifo Nhamodjo, PAIGC dissident candidate during the presidential elections of 2012 and current president of the transition, is presently under disciplinary sanctions imposed by the party. In this context, the PAIGC congress scheduled for January 2013 was postponed *sine die*, casting uncertainties on the future of this political grouping. The PAIGC, which also maintains tense relations with other political

parties, currently heads the parliamentary committee in charge of the revision of the political agreement and the Pact of Transition or *Pacto de Transição* (also referred to as the Pact of the Regime or *Pacto de Regime*). Disagreements between the diverse political actors may therefore hinder the adoption of the roadmap, which could compromise the proper organisation of the 2013 elections.

The international community has been divided on the position to adopt following the unconstitutional change of government in Guinea-Bissau. The coup has resulted in the international isolation of Guinea-Bissau. In fact, doubts about the willingness of the transitional authorities to restore constitutional order and to fight drug trafficking and impunity have led to the non-recognition of the new authorities, and especially the suspension of development aid by some donors and bilateral partners. Even if these measures can help to promote greater inclusiveness by maintaining pressure on the transitional authorities, they have for the moment mainly worsened an already precarious socio-economic situation.

Unfortunately, the economic sanctions are affecting particularly the most vulnerable sections of the population rather than the ruling elites, whether civilian or military, even though these elites are responsible for the current crisis. The demonstration by civil servants on 25 April 2012, after the junta declared that wages could not be paid, reflected the possible dangers that could destabilise the transitional process and reforms that were already uncertain.

Ultimately, the incapacity of the military-political elite to reach consensus on the modalities of the transition, the divisions within the international community that hinder unified support of the

country, the deterioration of the socio-economic situation in Guinea-Bissau and the risk of social conflict raise serious concerns about the country's future.

Key issues and internal dynamics

Guinea-Bissau has been experiencing cycles of political crisis since its independence in 1974. The coup of 12 April 2012 that interrupted both the ongoing presidential elections and constitutional order was the latest in a series of such events. Key issues with regard to the stabilisation of the country revolve around the power of the armed forces to install or remove civilian authorities depending on their own interests, as well as the manipulation of the armed forces by political leaders and vice versa.

The prime target of the April 2012 coup was former prime minister Gomes, leader of the PAIGC, who received close to 49 per cent of the votes during the first round of the presidential elections held on 18 March 2012. Before being ousted by the military, Gomes was due to run on 29 April against Kumba Yala, leader of the Social Renewal Party (*Partido para a Renovação Social*, or PRS), who was president from 2000 to 2003.

Gomes is known to hold very different views from those shared by leaders of the armed forces. These differences appear to emanate from Gomes' desire to reform the armed forces. Such a desire was reflected by the deployment of the Angolan mission to support the reform of the defence and security sectors in Guinea-Bissau. The Angolan Military Mission in Guinea-Bissau (MISSANG) resulted from negotiations between Gomes and the Angolan Government with the support of the CPLP. Due to the tense relations with the armed forces, leaders of the putsch accused Gomes of attempting to minimise the role and power of the armed forces on the political

landscape by bringing it back under civilian control. In fact, he was accused of mounting a parallel military force for his own protection. Gomes reinforced MISSANG so that the mission could act against the army if deemed necessary. Although Antonio Indjai declared that there was no opposition to the presence of foreign troops in the country, he portrayed the weaponry of the Angolans as a threat to the integrity of Guinea-Bissau. The perceived threat posed by Angolan troops was reinforced by the fact that the Angolan mission was empowered to conduct counter-drug trafficking operations in a context where drug trafficking was being cited as a major source of revenue for top military personnel.

More importantly, the army has largely been managed by a logic based on ethnicity since independence. The Balanta, the largest ethnic group in the country, enlisted with great enthusiasm in the armed forces during the liberation struggle against Portugal and, until now, the army remains largely dominated by this group. Consequently, Balanta officers occupy most of the key leadership positions in the army. Such leadership dominance by the Balanta was consolidated recently through the Yala presidency. On that basis, Balanta leaders depend on the army to champion their causes against the rest of the population, particularly the mixed race Mulatos or Mestizos whose interests are allegedly being defended by Gomes. However, leaders of other communities also allegedly manipulate the armed forces to gain access to power, though to a lesser extent.

Yet, the coup of April 2012 emerged in a context where Gomes was about to face the Balanta candidate, Yala, who stood little chance of winning the vote. In addition, Nhamadjo, also a Balanta, who achieved third position after the first round of voting in the

presidential elections, is known to have significant influence within the armed forces. It is worth noting that, historically, the Balanta group had developed a sense of marginalisation, particularly with regard to the Mestizo community, who are of mixed African and Portuguese descent. Although the Mestizo community constitutes a minority in Guinea-Bissau, they have the monopoly of both economic and political power.

From another perspective, tensions within the PAIGC are hindering the process of dialogue. This is reflected in the manifestation of the constant rivalry within the party between the defenders of the status quo, who would like to preserve the historical role of the army as a liberation force, and the reformists, who are seeking to undertake political reforms that they regard as necessary for transforming Guinea-Bissau into a modern state.

Geopolitical dynamics

Africa and RECs

There have been conflicting approaches between the AU and ECOWAS and between these organisations and the wider international community on the management of the situation in Guinea-Bissau following the coup. On the one hand, as early as the day following the coup, the AU condemned it and took a decision, which continues until now, to suspend Guinea-Bissau from all its activities. Although the AU referred to 'the principle of subsidiarity and in this regard ECOWAS' decisions were endorsed' (PSC/MIN/COMM/1. (CCCXIX)), it took a stronger stance than ECOWAS in condemning the coup and still remains hesitant to lend full support to the authority of the transition, given what it perceives as the lack of inclusiveness of the current government and the absence of clarity regarding the next steps of the transition administration.

The application of the principle of subsidiarity propelled ECOWAS as the main actor in the resolution of the crisis, in spite of the presence of Angola, which is, like Guinea-Bissau, a member of the CPLP. Contributing to this situation, disagreements had emerged between the CPLP, particularly Angola, and the leaders of the coup, who rejected the presence of Angolan troops in Guinea-Bissau. Thus, the CPLP condemned and rejected the coup, appealing at the same time, on 14 April 2012, for a UN-mandated peacekeeping force and the completion of the electoral process.

ECOWAS supported the transition and took the lead from Angola who had deployed MISSANG in Guinea Bissau since March 2011. Following the ECOWAS extraordinary summit held in Dakar on 3 May 2012, a Pact of Transition and a Political Agreement were signed, under the auspices of ECOWAS, on 16 and 18 May 2012, respectively. These agreements resulted in the establishment of a 12-month transition and the deployment on 18 May 2012 of ECOMIB to replace MISSANG, which completed its withdrawal on 9 June 2012.

The mandate of ECOMIB was extended until May 2013 during the conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS on 11 November 2012. During ECOWAS' 42nd Ordinary Session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government held in Yamoussoukro on 28 February 2013, the period of transition in Guinea-Bissau was extended until 31 December 2013. Furthermore, Nhamadjo was requested to submit to the National People's Congress a revised and realistic roadmap for the preparation and holding of free, fair and transparent general elections before the end of 2013. In addition, ECOWAS urged the AU as well as international partners to recognise the ongoing transition and lift sanctions against Guinea-Bissau.

United Nations

The Security Council of the United Nations (UNSC), in its Resolution 2092 adopted on 22 February 2013, decided to 'extend the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) until 31 May 2013'. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to 'submit a report on the assessment of the situation in Guinea-Bissau, recommendations on the mandate of the mission and the restructuring of the support provided by the UN, taking into account the magnitude of challenges as well as the recommendations of the joint international mission'.

Moreover, the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the UN, Tayé Brook Zerihoun, at the UNSC meeting of 5 February 2013, stated that: 'Despite the progress towards an inclusive transition process, impunity remains a major problem in Guinea-Bissau'. He noted that, 'the lack of civilian control over the security forces and defense and persistent attempts by some politicians to manipulate the military for sectarian purposes (threatened) the functioning of state institutions and (remained) sources of great concern'.

These concerns are in line with those of the UNSG's report of 11 January 2013, in which he referred to 'a significant deterioration of security conditions and serious violations of the rule of law and human rights following the incidents of 21 October 2012, in the Bissalanca air base in Bissau'.

Previously, the UNSC in its Resolution 2048 adopted on 18 May 2012, appealed for an immediate return to constitutional order and unanimously adopted sanctions against five leaders of the 12 April coup. In this resolution, the UNSC, which included Portugal at the time, urged member countries to 'take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into or transit

through their territory' and reserved the right to complete the travel ban by 'additional measures' such as an arms embargo and financial sanctions.

International community

The international community has unanimously condemned the coup d'état of 12 April 2012 that interrupted the electoral process in Guinea-Bissau. The CPLP, to which Guinea-Bissau belongs, and particularly Portugal, refused to recognise the transition and firmly demanded the continuation of the electoral process. Although this request was not adopted in Resolution 2048 of the UNSC, Portugal nevertheless tried to frame the EU's response along those lines. In fact, the EU, which suspended development aid and imposed sanctions against the junta after the mutiny of 1 April 2010, strongly condemned the coup d'état of 12 April 2012. The EU Council, in its conclusions at its 23 April 2012 meeting, called for 'the immediate restoration of the legitimate government, the completion of the democratic electoral process and the immediate return to constitutional order'. The deterioration of stability following the coup d'état persuaded the EU to strengthen its sanctions against the military junta on 31 May 2012. The EU also 'added fifteen people to the list of persons subject to a ban from entering the territory of the EU and a freeze of their assets in the EU'. The international community's refusal to recognise the transitional authorities and the suspension of development aid by donors such as the African Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the United Nations, and Brazil is severely affecting the functioning of the Interim Government.

Civil society

Beyond political and societal divisions, human rights issues and concerns have worsened

considerably since the coup of 12 April 2012. On 7 July 2012, five major non-governmental organisations issued a joint statement drawing attention to the prohibition against demonstrations and the pursuit of intimidation measures against political and civil society actors who had been critical of the transition. The situation deteriorated further as a consequence of the failed coup of 21 November 2012. The president of the Guinean League for Human Rights stated at a conference held on 13 December 2012 that 'citizens (were) facing an unlawful restriction of their fundamental rights and freedom'. He added that the freedom to manifest, the freedom of assembly, press freedom and expression (were also being) challenged. Certain fringes of civil society (such as the NGO *Voz di paz* are engaged in the national reconciliation. Under the patronage of the Bishop of Bissau, this NGO has launched a call for a social contract to develop a vision for the future of the country. Guinean civil society must become more involved in managing the crisis and be taken into account in the transition process.

Scenarios

Given the above analysis the following could take place:

Scenario 1

The adoption of the roadmap and the document to end the crisis referred to as *Pacto de Regime* is delayed due to differences about the process of transition, not only within political parties, but also between some political parties and coup leaders. The sanctions, particularly economic, that are supposed to exert pressure on the transitional authorities for a return to constitutional order worsen the already precarious socio-economic situation and lead to popular uprisings. This situation weakens the transitional authorities and causes fresh interference by the armed forces, further dividing the

response of the international community on this issue.

Scenario 2

The road map and the '*Pacto de Regime*' are adopted and the date for the next presidential elections is set by the Interim Government in agreement with ECOWAS and other international actors. In accordance with the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau, the Supreme Court announces the list of presidential candidates. However, the junta opposes participation by certain candidates, particularly those advocating the subordination of the army to civilian rule. Consequently, the electoral process is blocked and the organisation of the elections under the minimum conditions to ensure free and fair elections becomes uncertain.

Scenario 3

The international isolation of Guinea-Bissau and the suspension of aid pressure political parties to agree to put aside partisan differences and fully support the Transition, thus enabling both the setting of a date and the holding of peaceful and credible elections with the support of the international community. The transition process ends peacefully with the election of a new president through free and fair elections. The election result and the election process are accepted and respected by all sides.

Options

Given the above scenarios, the following options could be considered by the PSC:

Option 1

The international community should resolve its differences and adopt a more coherent position. The conduct of a joint mission was a step in the right direction, but the subsequent persistent lack of such a unified approach limits the capacity of the international actors to pressure the transitional authorities for a more inclusive

process and denies the unified support that the country needs, to undertake the necessary political process and military reforms.

Option 2

The PSC could request the AU Commission to dispatch a high-level mission to Guinea-Bissau to boost efforts and provide expertise for finalising the elaboration of the roadmap.

Option 3

While maintaining pressure on the interim government for a more inclusive process leading to the adoption of the required roadmap and the holding of elections might still be necessary, the international community, with the support of the PSC, should attempt to alleviate sanctions that potentially affect the most vulnerable sections of the population and extend support to civil society organisations which could play a positive role in facilitating the transition.

Documentation

AU documents

- Report of the Joint ECOWAS/AU/CPLP/EU/UN Assessment Mission to Guinea-Bissau, 22 March 2013
- PSC, 361th Meeting, 22 March 2013
- Consultative Meeting on the situation in Guinea Bissau, 26 January 2013
- PSC, 318th Meeting, 17 April 2012
- PSC, 319th Meeting at Ministerial level, 24 April 2012
- PSC, 327th Meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government, 14 July 2012

ECOWAS documents

- Communiqué N°053/2013, 28 February 2013
- Communiqué extraordinary session of the authority of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, Abidjan, 19 January 2013

- Communiqué N°305/2012, 8 November 2012
- Communiqué, Extraordinary Summit of the Authority of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, Dakar, 3 May 2012

UN documents

- Report of the Secretary-General on the Restoration of the Constitutional Order in Guinea-Bissau, 28 February 2013
- Security Council, Resolution 2092, 22 February 2013
- Security Council, 6915th Meeting, 5 February 2013
- Security Council, Resolution 2948, 18 May 2012

Other documents

- EU, The Council Hardens its Sanctions Against the Military Junta in Guinea-Bissau, Brussels, 31 May 2012
- EU, Conclusion of the Council on Guinea-Bissau, Brussels, 23 April 2012

Country analysis

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

Previous AU PSC Communiqués

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its meeting on 25 March 2013, received a briefing by the Peace and Security Commissioner of the AU Commission, on developments in the Central African Republic (CAR). The PSC also listened to representatives of the government of the CAR, Chad as Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the ECCAS Secretariat, South Africa, Uganda and the United Nations. In a communiqué PSC/PR/COMM. (CCCLXIII) that followed the meeting, the PSC expressed concern about the deteriorating security in the CAR and strongly condemned violence against the civilian population. The Peace and Security Council labeled the seizure of the capital, Bangui, by the Seleka rebels, as an unconstitutional change of government, violating the AU Constitutive Act, the Lomé Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as the decisions of the PSC and the Assembly of the AU.

Subsequently the PSC decided to immediately suspend the participation of the CAR in all AU activities, as well as to impose sanctions, including a travel ban and asset freeze, on leaders of the Seleka group, and urged member states of the AU and its partners to 'completely isolate' the perpetrators of the unconstitutional change of government in the CAR. The PSC further demanded the implementation of all provisions of

the Libreville Agreements and the transitional arrangements and restoration of constitutional order. The PSC requested the AU Commission to initiate talks with ECCAS, the UN and other international stakeholders to facilitate an effective and coordinated international response to the situation in the CAR.

Following the capture of the capital, Bangui, by the Seleka Rebels, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, expressed her deep concern about 'the negative evolution of the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and its detrimental consequences for the country, the region and the continent'. In a press statement dated 24 March 2013, Dr Dlamini-Zuma condemned what she called the unwarranted resumption of hostilities by the armed group Seleka, which forceably controlled, Bangui, contrary to the 11 January 2013 Libreville Agreements. The chairperson called for collective, unified and decisive African action for the implementation of all provisions of the Libreville Agreements and the restoration of constitutional order in the CAR.

The situation in the CAR featured on the agenda of the PSC on 23 March 2013. In a communiqué PSC/PR/COMM (CCCLXII) that followed the meeting, the PSC noted the rapidly deteriorating situation in the CAR, following the decision of the Seleka rebel group to break the ceasefire. The PSC, which rejected the use of armed rebellion as a means to advancing political claims, stressed the obligation of all parties engaged in the conflict to refrain from any acts of violence against civilians. The PSC also called on member states to give support to ECCAS and the CAR Government in order to 'preserve peace, ensure safety of lives and protect civilians, and ensure

respect for constitutional legality and the CAR institutions'.

At its meeting of 14 January 2013, the PSC was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security and Chad's Permanent Representative to the AU, acting on behalf of the Chair of ECCAS, about the situation in the CAR. In its press release, the PSC commended efforts by ECCAS to resolve the crisis and welcomed the ceasefire and the Declaration of Principles signed in Libreville on 11 January 2013, by the CAR Government, the democratic opposition, various rebel movements and the Seleka group, to put an end to the political and security crisis that has affected the CAR since December 2012. The PSC also discussed the CAR on 6 December 2012 and listened to the Report of the Chairperson of the Commission about the situation in the CAR [PSC/PR/2(CCCXLV)] as well as presentations made and statements issued by the AU Special Representative in the CAR, the Permanent Representative of the CAR to the AU, and the representatives of the UN and the European Union (EU). Referring back to its communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.1(CCLV), adopted at its 255th meeting held on 23 December 2010, the PSC called for the promotion of dialogue, the implementation of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme and the effective implementation of security sector reform (SSR), and the improvement of governance.

Earlier, on 8 January 2009, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr Jean Ping, had submitted his report to the PSC on the situation in the CAR PSC/PR/2(CCXV). Subsequently the Council had issued a communiqué, PSC/PR/Comm.(CCXV), in which it encouraged the implementation of the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 21 June 2008, and the recommendations of the

Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD) of December 2008.

Crisis escalation potential

The latest attack by rebels and their subsequent control of Bangui, has put the nation, with its long history of instability, in a state of uncertainty about its future. According to the UN the conflict has isolated much of the population of this impoverished country, and added to their suffering. In the absence of meaningful international action the current situation could deteriorate even further. There are reports of widespread 'rape, looting (and) recruitment of children'. The conflict has also restricted humanitarian access to refugees and resulted in more than 175 000 internally displaced persons. The past weeks have also witnessed a surge in the number of civilians fleeing the CAR conflict into neighbouring countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Chad. There are currently 1,5 million people in the country who need assistance, and the latest fighting will likely increase that number unless the situation improves and aid workers are allowed to reach those affected.

Dialogue among political and social stakeholders seems scant and the CAR continues to face many political, security, socio-economic and humanitarian challenges. A possible security vacuum could also pave the way for more attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which has been active in the south-eastern part of the CAR.

Key issues and internal dynamics

On 10 December 2012, anticipating a groundswell of public outrage and popular disenchantment directed at alleged irregularities by the government of President Francois Bozizé in the presidential elections of 2011, a coalition of insurgents named Seleka launched

a sweeping attack that resulted in the capture of important CAR towns with surprising ease. Seleka is an alliance of dissident factions of former rebel groups. Due to its poor equipment, its lack of discipline and insufficient professional training, the CAR national army did not offer any meaningful resistance.

In a laudable and unfortunately widely unnoticed move, ECCAS quickly responded to the crisis by sending an assessment mission of its secretariat and by deploying troops to the CAR as an interposition force under MICOPAX (Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the CAR). ECCAS' troops were able to stop the rebel advance in Damara, about 75 km from Bangui. France reinforced its 320 troops at Bangui airport, providing technical support to MICOPAX while South Africa reinforced its own contingent at the request of President Bozizé. These deployments paved the way for peace talks between the government, the rebel coalition and the civilian opposition that ushered in a negotiated settlement in Libreville under the aegis of ECCAS on 12 December 2012.

In March 2013, claiming that President Bozizé didn't show any sign of upholding the terms of the peace deal and that he was, instead, undermining the peace agreement to reinforce his grip on power, the Seleka rebels launched a decisive lightning attack that resulted in the seizure of Bangui on 24 March 2013. Heavy fighting involving South African troops resulted in the deaths of 13 South African soldiers, who were fighting alongside CAR soldiers.

The Seleka-led coup d'état is the most recent in a series of seemingly never-ending unconstitutional changes of government in the CAR. In addition to being one of the poorest countries on the continent, the

landlocked territory has experienced very little political stability in its history. The inability of successive governments to provide basic public goods and services has created a political culture that has prevented the emergence of a democratic polity. More worrisome, political actors in the CAR seem to consider power as something that is acquired, maintained, used and eventually relinquished through violent means. With the notable exceptions of 1993 and 1999 when Ange-Félix Patassé was elected, there have only been violent changes of government. The cycle of chronic insurgencies in the CAR is the aggregated result of geography, poor governance and external interference.

In terms of geography, the CAR is a landlocked country at the heart of the continent that borders on the most undeveloped parts of several neighbouring countries. They are the southern part of South Sudan, the west of Sudan (Darfur), the north-east of the DRC province Equateur, southern Chad, the north-east of Congo Brazzaville and Cameroon's extreme eastern province. Most of these countries (Sudan, South Sudan, the DRC and to a lesser extent today Chad and Congo) have experienced various degrees of instability in recent times that have impacted on the CAR, whose state construction and development programmes have largely remained elusive since independence. It is in this light that the use and abuse of the CAR's territory by various rebel formations from Sudan and Chad, including Joseph Kony's LRA (operating from Uganda, which does not share a contiguous border with the CAR) should be understood. In addition to serving as a playground for rebel movements in the region, the CAR is devoid of viable market opportunities beyond mineral exploitation, due to the country's

absence of transportation infrastructure and general inaccessibility.

Poor governance in the CAR has been consistent with all successive administrations. The inability of all these governments to reduce widespread poverty has left the country at the very bottom of most international rankings. For example, the 2013 UN Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) ranks the CAR as 180th out of 187 countries. The CAR in its present form and condition exhibits some of the characteristics of a failed state given that any evidence of state control and a government presence beyond the outskirts of the capital, Bangui, appears in the form of extortion and predation. The soldier, whether from a rebel group or the army, the tax collector, the customs officer all have the opportunity and the power to intimidate and extort at will. To increase his grip on power in the capital, President Bozizé has included his family and close friends in his political constituency. In the parliament elected in 2011, 20 legislators could claim a direct family link with the president. His sons, cousins, nephews, his wife and even his mistresses were elected as members of parliament. However, the limited transparency and questionable fairness of these elections did not only confer a dubious legitimacy to the president, but also increased the nepotist networks he maintained to ensure his control of the capital. The automatic consequence of these corrupt practices was the radicalisation of both the political opposition and the armed groups, all of whom opposed the President's attempts to modify the constitution so that he could rule for a third term. His inability to reform the security sector in a just and inclusive manner also fueled the growing opposition to his rule.

Many countries have had substantial influence in the management of the CAR's internal affairs. The most important is probably the former colonial power, France, which has been exploiting uranium in the country for several decades and has wielded major political influence by organising or tolerating military coups in the country. After several decades, the French military base of Bouar was closed in 2008, leaving only a limited contingent of French soldiers behind. Another important external actor in recent history has been Chad. Having helped President Bozizé to seize power in 2003, about 200 Chadian soldiers remained in the country for several years, mostly to ensure his protection. Their withdrawal in November 2012 was a sign of the deteriorating relationship between the CAR and Chad against the background of increased rebel activity at the Chadian border. Although a relative newcomer, South Africa signed an agreement of military cooperation and training with the CAR in 2007 that was renewed in 2012 after the rebels launched their first attack. It remains to be seen whether or not the new authorities in Bangui will recognize the validity of this agreement as their campaign for the seizure of Bangui only succeeded after several casualties on both sides.

The self-proclaimed President, Michel Djotodja, has committed himself and his government to respecting the spirit of the Libreville Agreements and in a move to show his goodwill has re-appointed Nicolas Tiangaye as Prime Minister. However, the accompanying announcement to rule by decree and to dissolve the National Assembly casts some doubt as to the inclusive nature and intent of the transition period. Major short-term challenges concern the re-establishment of security in Bangui and the

appointment of a transition team that is inclusive and capable of steering the country towards minimum reforms.

Geopolitical dynamics

Africa and RECs

ECCAS has played a leading role in attempting to resolve the security and political crisis in the CAR that began to escalate in December 2012. Countries of the region, including Chad and the Congo, also put a lot of effort into initiating talks between the government of the CAR and the relevant rebel groups. Their efforts resulted in the 11 January 2013 Libreville Agreements that produced the road map for transition and political settlement.

In January 2013, South Africa sent additional troops to the CAR as part of a bilateral agreement with the government of the CAR to reinforce its presence as part of a planned deployment of 400. Most of these troops were stationed in Bangui to prevent the Seleka rebels from controlling the capital. On 24 March 2013, during the battle for the seizure of Bangui, 13 of these South African soldiers were killed. Because of the lack of clarity surrounding South Africa's involvement in the CAR as well as the conditions that led to the decision of reinforcing troops in the CAR, President Jacob Zuma's government finds itself under pressure from opposition parties to withdraw troops as requested by the Libreville Agreements. More worrisome was the fact that South Africa became involved in the CAR crisis without consulting neighbouring countries that were themselves negotiating a peace deal and also sending troops to stop the rebels. South Africa's absence from the peace talks in Libreville in January and subsequent failure to get involved in the political process negotiated by ECCAS denied Pretoria an opportunity to become an honest broker who could help end the

conflict. In the mean time, South Africa has strongly rejected allegations of mining interests in the CAR's mineral resources as justification for the deployment.

An extraordinary ECCAS summit discussing the situation in the CAR and possible regional responses was scheduled to take place on 3 April 2013 in N'Djamena, the capital of Chad. Chadian President Idriss Deby, who currently chairs the 10-nation ECCAS, extended an invitation to South Africa's President Zuma.

United Nations

On 24 March 2013 the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, condemned the unconstitutional seizure of power in the CAR and called for the swift restoration of constitutional order. The Secretary-General noted reports of serious violations of human rights and warned that those who were responsible for committing such violations would be held accountable. The statement emphasised that the UN was concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in the country and the reports of looting in the capital, Bangui, including of UN property. The Secretary-General further urged the implementation of the Libreville Agreements, negotiated by the Heads of State and Government of the ECCAS, to ensure durable peace and stability in the country. He stated that the UN would work closely with the AU and ECCAS to help resolve the crisis.

Following its meeting on the CAR on 25 March 2013, the UN Security Council also strongly condemned the resumption of attacks by the Seleka rebel coalition and called on all parties in the CAR to refrain from acts of violence against civilians. The Security Council stated that 'those responsible for violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law, including

violence against civilians, sexual and gender-based violence and recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, must be held accountable.' He called on all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access and to fully respect international human rights law. The Security Council also called for the restoration of the rule of law, constitutional order and the implementation of the Libreville agreements, and noted that it considered the Government of National Unity to be in charge of holding legislative elections.

International community

Following the start of the latest attacks by the Seleka rebels against the CAR government, France, which already has 250 soldiers in the CAR, has sent another 300 troops from Gabon to ensure the safety of its citizens and interests in the country. France has been requesting the international community to step up its efforts to prevent the collapse of the government of the CAR. France had also requested an urgent Security Council meeting on 25 March 2013 to address the crisis.

The EU's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, called the rebel seizure of the capital, Bangui, 'unacceptable' and urged all sides to end hostilities and begin talks. She stated that violent or unconstitutional changes of government remained unacceptable and requested the parties to the conflict to show restraint and contribute to the re-establishment of civil order in the CAR.

The United States (US) government also condemned the rebel takeover of the CAR and called for a rapid return to constitutional order. State Department spokeswoman, Victoria Nuland, said that the US remained deeply concerned about the serious deterioration in the security situation in the CAR and declared:

'We strongly condemn the illegitimate seizure of power by force by the Seleka rebel alliance, Michel Djotodia's self-appointment as president, and his suspension of the constitution and National Assembly'. The US also announced that it would continue to recognise the national unity government led by Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye as the 'only legitimate government' of the CAR. The US further called on coup leaders to 'quickly establish an open and legitimate process leading to presidential elections and the re-establishment of a constitutional government.' In a separate statement, the US government warned that it would withhold around \$2,2 million in aid intended for the CAR.

Scenarios

The international community has rightly condemned the unconstitutional change of government in the CAR and has urged all parties to commence talks in order to return to constitutional order. As paradoxical as this may be, and without presaging the goodwill of the new, rebel-dominated, government, no re-instatement of the Bozizé administration is conceivable. In this case, the coup opens up some opportunities that must be seized by all actors to end the political crisis. The following is a list of potential scenarios:

Scenario 1

Divisions among the diverse conglomeration of former rebels, the democratic opposition and civil society who now comprise the new government, could further destabilise the country, leading to more factionalism and complicating the solution of the current crisis.

Scenario 2

International pressure leads to a much-needed inclusive dialogue supported by ECCAS and the AU as well as the UN office in the CAR. This dialogue could take place

under a renewed Libreville agreement and would establish a foundation for peaceful elections and political settlement, addressing the claim of marginalisation and bad governance.

Scenario 3

Lack of coordination between international actors (ECCAS, AU, SA) and a literal reading of the AU doctrine against unconstitutional changes of government produces inconsiderate sanctions against the rebels and their resultant isolation, leading to a deepening of the socio-economic problems and political grievances in the country.

Options

Given the above scenarios the following options could be considered by the PSC to improve the security and stability in the CAR:

Option 1

The AU PSC, through the AU Liaison Office and its Special Representative in the CAR, could collaborate with ECCAS to design a detailed plan to advance the transition toward constitutional order in the CAR. This plan should involve the UN office in the CAR.

Option 2

The PSC could liaise with the AU Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit in collaboration with other key stakeholders, like the UN Peacebuilding Commission

and Peacebuilding Support Office, to ensure that there is adequate logistical and planning assistance for the effective conduct of an inclusive, transparent and peaceful transition in the CAR.

Option 3

The PSC could monitor the proper implementation of the sanctions imposed on the CAR and penalise any violation of those sanctions. In addition, the AU should send a fact-finding mission to the CAR to investigate allegations of child-soldiers within the ranks of the Seleka rebels.

Documentation

Relevant AU documents

(PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCLXIII))(25 March 2013) Communiqué on situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)

Press Release (24 March 2013) Press Release on the situation in Central African Republic (CAR)

(PSC/PR/COMM(CCCLXII) (23 March 2013) Communiqué on situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)

Press Release on situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) (4 January 2013)

(PSC/PR/2(CCCXLV) (6 December 2012) Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in the CAR

(PSC/PR/COMM.1(CCLV) (6 December 2012) Communiqué on situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)

(PSC/PR/2(CCXV) (8 January 2009) Report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)

PSC/PR/Comm.(CCXV) (8 January 2009) Communiqué on situation in the Central African Republic (CAR)

Important dates to diarise

7	April	Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide
22	April	International Mother Earth Day
25	April	World Malaria Day
3	May	World Press Freedom Day
19-27	May	21 st African Union Summit, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (theme: Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance)
29	May	International Day of UN Peacekeepers

Country	Election	Date *
Egypt	Parliamentary	(the elections will take place in four stages) 27-28 April 2013 15-16 May 2013 2-3 June 2013 19-20 June 2013
Somaliland	House of Representatives	May 2013
Guinea	National Assembly	12 May 2013
Equatorial Guinea	House of People's Representatives and Local	26 May 2013
Mali	Presidential, National Assembly and Local	7 July 2013
Madagascar	Presidential 1 st Round	Postponed to 24 July 2013
	Presidential 2 nd Round National Assembly	25 September 2013 25 September 2013

**could change, dependent on circumstances*

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