




INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 24 December 2015

Réf. : MINUSCA/OSRSG/046/2015

To : General Balla Keita, Acting Force Commander
Mr. Luis Miguel Carrilho, Police Commissioner

From : Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, SRSG 

Subject: **MINUSCA directive on the protection of schools and universities against military use**

Purpose:

1. These guidelines aim at preventing the use of schools and universities by MINUSCA Force and Police and to minimize the impact of armed conflict on the security and education of children.

General principles

2. Schools have to be havens of peace, where children are protected even in times of armed conflict. They are, however, often attacked or used for military purposes by parties to the conflict in the Central African Republic, to the detriment of children.
3. MINUSCA Force and Police are requested not to use schools for any purpose. All MINUSCA military and police personnel should avoid encroaching on the security and education of children by using the following guidelines as good practice.
4. Schools and universities that are operational should never be used in any way. This applies to schools and universities that are closed after school hours, during weekends and holidays and during vacation periods.
5. Abandoned schools and university buildings which are occupied or used by MINUSCA Force and Police should be liberated without delay in order to allow educational authorities to reopen them as soon as possible. All signs of militarisation or fortification of such buildings or structures should be completely removed after the withdrawal and any damage caused to the institution should be repaired quickly before hand-over to the authorities, to allow the return to educational use.
6. All ammunitions, unexploded ordinance or war debris should be cleared from the site.
7. The use of a school or university by a party to a conflict is not permitted, and cannot provide grounds for continuation of such use.

8. Military and police personnel tasked to secure schools or universities should avoid wherever possible entering into the school premises or buildings in order not to compromise their civilian status.
9. The Force Commander and the Police Commissioner are requested to ensure the implementation and wide dissemination of this directive.

Definition of terms:

“Schools and universities”

This denotes places used principally for the purpose of education. It comprises kindergartens or nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, vocational training centres and higher education institutions including universities, colleges and technical training schools. It also includes all property and grounds that belongs to these institutions.

It does not however, include institutions which are dedicated to military training and education.

“Use”

This signifies any activity conducted within the physical space or premises of a school or a university in support of military efforts, be it temporarily or for a longer term. It includes, but is not limited to, the following: as a military barracks or base; for offensive or defensive positioning; for the stocking of arms and ammunitions; for interrogation and detention; for military training; as an observation post; as a firing or fire control position. It does not include situations where the force and the police are present in proximity to schools and universities to provide protection to the school or ensure security.

References:

1. United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual 2012, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (Section 2.13, page 26);
2. Draft Lucens Guidelines on the Protection of Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2013;
3. Security Council resolutions 1998 (2011) and 2143 (2014).

cc: Ms. Diane Corner, DSRSG/P
Mr. Aurelien Agbenonci, DSRSG/RC/HC
Mr. Aliou Sene, Chief of Staff