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Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Centrafrique



UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Human Rights Division

Monthly Report: Human Rights Situation

March 2023

The Human Rights Division's (HRD) mandate includes assisting the Government of the Central African Republic (CAR) to promote and protect human rights and prevent violations and abuses through its field offices and headquarters in Bangui. This report is based on information received by the HRD and only includes human rights violations and abuses that were documented and verified during the month of March 2023. Incidents that could not be verified are not included. Ordinary crimes are also excluded from this report.

This information is shared locally as well as nationally with the CAR's authorities and partners.

Human Rights Violations and Abuses, and Breaches of International Humanitarian Law

1. During the month of March 2023, the Human Rights Division (HRD), including the Office of the Senior Women Protection Advisor (OSWPA) and the Child Protection Section (CPS), documented, and verified 202 human rights violations and abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL), affecting 435 civilian victims (including 37 women, 79 boys, 35 girls and 26 collective victims). Among these victims, 136 (including 24 women, six boys, one girl and five groups of collective victims) suffered multiple violations. Out of the total number of documented violations, there were 162, affecting 318 victims that occurred during

Main Trends

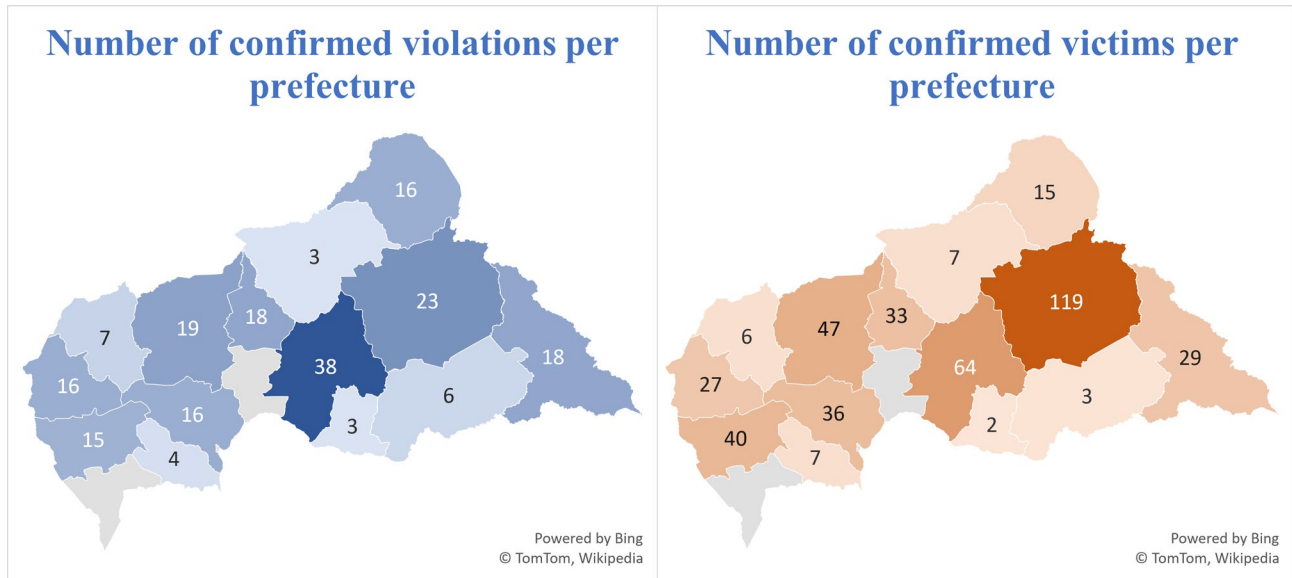
In total, **202 human rights violations and abuses** as well as breaches of IHL **affecting 435 victims (including 37 women, 79 boys, and 35 girls)** were documented in March 2023. This constitutes an **increase** in the number of victims compared to February 2023.

During the reporting period, State forces were responsible for 46% of all human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law while armed groups were responsible for 43% of the victims.

the month of March. The HRD also recorded 64 allegations of human rights violations and abuses affecting at least 99 victims (including four women, one boy and 16 groups of collective victims), which were under investigation at the end of March and were therefore not included in this report. This is partly due to the challenges HRD is facing in investigating those violations and abuses due to the deterioration of the security situation.

2. In March, the number of victims increased by 24% compared to February 2023, during which time 351 victims were documented. This can be explained by the increasing number of attacks, ambushes, and abduction of civilians on the roads perpetrated by the armed groups, documented this month by the HRD along with a higher number of collective victims. The number of violations remained roughly the same as the number of violations documented in February (209 violations, a 3% decrease).

- The **Ouaka** prefecture was the most affected in terms of human rights violations and abuses (38 violations and 64 victims), while the **Haute-Kotto** prefecture, registered the most victims (23 violations and 119 victims). This can be attributed to the high number of cases of recruitment and use of children verified by the HRD this month (79 children with 56 boys and 23 girls).



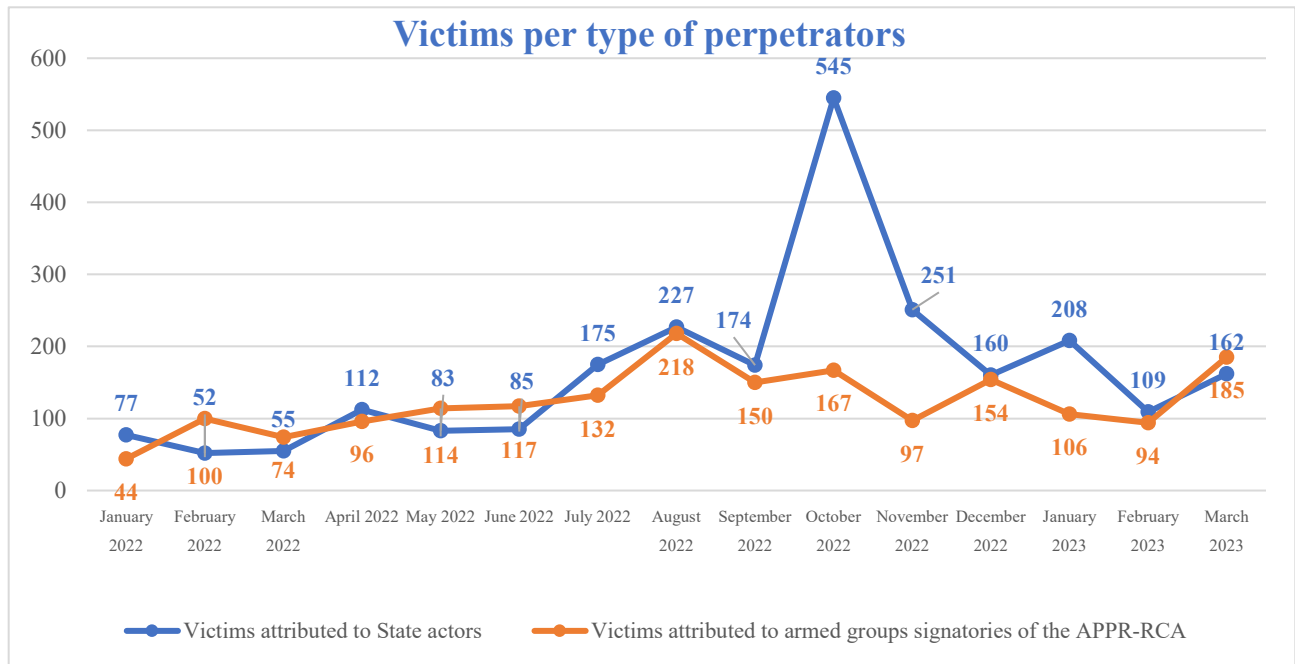
- In March 2023, the most common types of violations and abuses documented were arbitrary arrest and/or detention and conditions of detention (28%), the violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (21%), and the violations of the right to life (17%). Violations to the right to property were mostly committed alongside other violations. In addition, 26 summary and extrajudicial executions and other killings were documented affecting 33 people. Men were most likely to be victims of extrajudicial execution or other killings (24 victims), ill-treatment (33), deprivation of liberty (22) and arbitrary arrest and/or detention (88 victims in total). Women suffered from ill-treatment (15), deprivation of liberty (six) and arbitrary arrest and/or detention (five victims). Boys and girls were mainly victims of recruitment and use (respectively 57 and 23).

Perpetrators: State actors, armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA, and others

- For the period under review, State actors committed 46% of the violations and breaches of international humanitarian law, compared to 34% for armed groups signatories to the *Accord Politique pour la Paix et la Réconciliation en République Centrafricaine* (APPR-RCA). The armed groups signatories of the APPR-RCA were responsible for 42% of the victims while State forces account for 37% of the victims. The remaining 19% of violations and abuses were committed by other actors, including unidentified armed men and armed groups non signatory to the APPR, as well as a self-defence group and due to explosive ordnance.
- State actors were responsible for 94 violations affecting 162 victims (including 12 women, 11 boys and 12 groups of collective victims).** The most common type of violation committed by State actors were those associated with detention, including arbitrary arrest and/or detention (34 violations) and inhuman conditions of detention (18), violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (19) and violations of the right to life (seven) with five extra-judicial executions and other killing.
- Amongst the State actors, the Gendarmerie perpetrated the most violations (37) representing 39% of the violations perpetrated by State forces and 18% of the total number of violations. In March, the Gendarmerie committed 37 violations affecting 96 victims (including six women and 10 boys), and were responsible for 22% of the total number of victims. The *Forces armées Centrafricaines* (FACA), alone or jointly with the

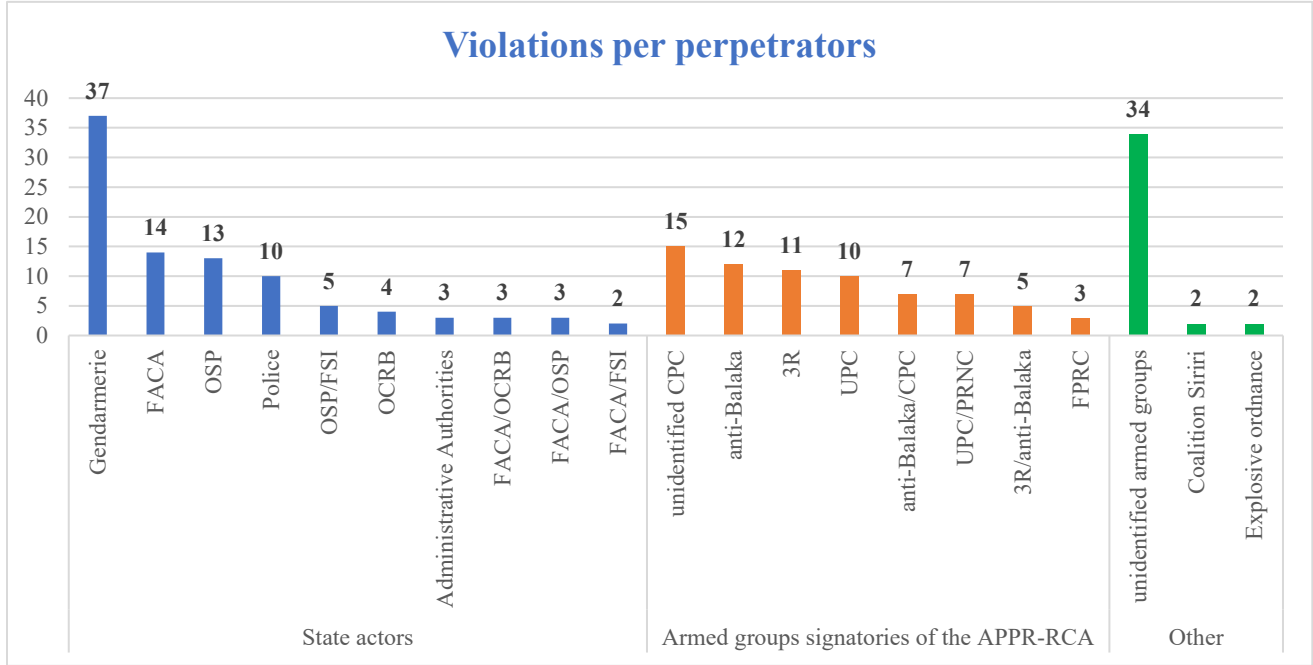
Office Central de Répression du Banditisme (OCRB), the Internal Security Forces (ISF) or the Other Security Personnel (OSP), were responsible for 22 violations, affecting 14 victims. In addition, the violations perpetrated by the State actors were committed alongside other violations.

8. **Armed groups signatories of the APPR-RCA were responsible for 70 human rights abuses and breaches of IHL affecting 185 victims (including 12 women, 27 girls, and 61 boys).** The high number of boys and girls victims of human rights abuses can be explained by the high number of recruitment and use of children verified by the HRD this month. The other most common types of abuses committed by armed groups signatories of the APPR-RCA were summary execution and other killing (15), ill-treatment (11), abductions (nine) and death threats or threats to physical and mental integrity (six each).
9. Armed groups were likely to commit multiple abuses at once (24 out of the 70 abuses documented). It mostly involved the destruction or appropriation of property (12 out of 24 multiple abuses), abduction, ill-treatment, and death threats.



10. Among armed groups, the biggest share of the documented abuses were attributable to the *Union pour la Paix en Centrafrique* (UPC) (10 abuses affecting 34 victims). They also committed abuses jointly with the *Parti du Rassemblement de la Nation Centrafricaine* (PRNC) (seven abuses affecting three victims). The main human rights violations committed by the UPC, on their own or jointly with the PRNC, were summary executions and other killing, death threats, deprivation of liberty or abduction, and destruction or appropriation of property. Combatants of the *Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique* (UPC), jointly or on their own, continued to be active in the Haute-Kotto and Ouaka prefectures, where they were responsible for 12 abuses affecting 30 victims.

11. Various factions of Anti-Balaka committed 12 abuses, affecting six victims (three men, two girls and one group of collective victims). However, Anti-Balaka, jointly with other combatants of the *Coalition des Patriotes pour le Changement* (CPC) committed an additional seven abuses, affecting 11 victims (including nine men and two women). The most common types of violations committed by the Anti-Balaka, alone or jointly with other armed groups, were summary executions and other killing, ill-treatment, attacks against protected persons (medical, religious, humanitarian, and peacekeeping personnel) as well as one case of rape of a 13-year-old girl.

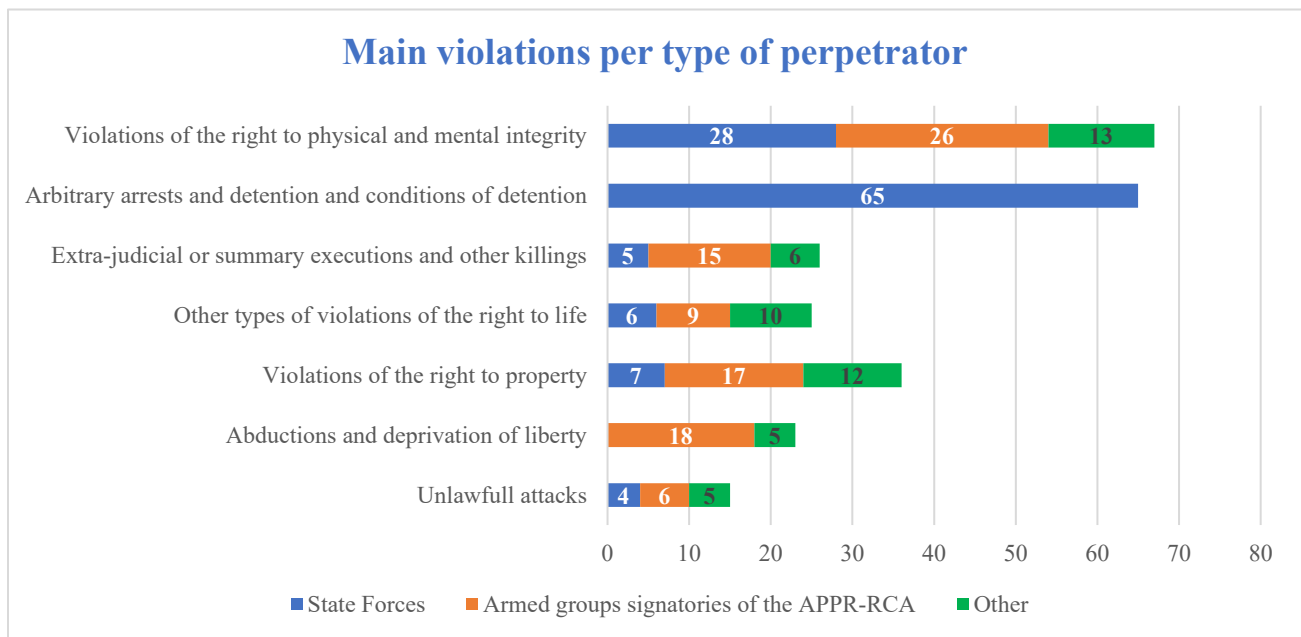


Geographical Analysis

12. About 38% of the violations and abuses documented in March occurred in the **Sector West**, which was the most affected with 77 violations and abuses affecting 163 victims. The State forces and the armed groups perpetrated the same number of violations (34 violations and 35 violations, respectively) but State actors were responsible for the most victims with 78 victims in comparison to the armed groups who were responsible for 48 victims. The high number of victims was largely due to violations documented in places of detention, with most notably 13 victims of arbitrary arrest and detention documented at the OCRB and 20 victims of inhuman conditions of detentions at the gendarmerie of Bossangoa, in the **Ouham** prefecture. The HRD also documented a high number of detainees waiting for their case to be processed while being held together with convicted persons. In Bangui, during a monitoring visit at the OCRB, the HRD documented a violation of the right to access to justice and fair trial of a 23-year-old man who had been illegally detained for nine months. The detainee was transferred from Bouar (Nana-Mambéré), following instructions from the Bouar Prosecutor’s Office. However, the Prosecutor of Bangui refused to prosecute him, as he does not recognize the case as falling under his jurisdiction. In the **Nana-Mambéré** and the **Ouham-Pendé** prefectures, the HRD documented clashes between the *Retour, Réclamation, Réhabilitation* (3R) and the State forces leading to civilian casualties. For example, the HRD confirmed one dead and nine injured civilians in a clash between armed groups and States forces in the **Nana-Mambéré** prefecture while the HRD documented two deaths following another clash between the 3R and the State forces in the **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture.
13. In the **Sector Centre**, 62 violations and abuses affecting 106 victims were documented. State actors were responsible for 53% of the human rights violations, with the Gendarmerie being the main perpetrator. This is

mostly due to violations documented in places of detention. The HRD also documented the case of the extrajudicial execution of a 17-year-old boy by a joint FACA and gendarmerie patrol and their proxies (see below *Security and political context in March 2023*). **Sector Centre** was the sector where the OSP were the most active with 10 violations affecting 16 victims in the **Ouaka** prefecture. The main violations documented were forced labour and arbitrary arrests and detention. For their part, armed groups were responsible for 14 violations affecting 22 victims with unidentified CPC combatants being the main perpetrators (nine violations affecting 16 victims). The HRD documented the summary execution and other killing of three civilians (including a woman and a boy) and the attempted killing of four persons (with one girl and one boy) by the UPC in the **Ouaka** prefecture. In addition, an attack of a FACA and FSI checkpoint by CPC combatants resulted in three deaths and four injuries among the civilian population as well as extensive material damage. On 16 March, the CPC issued a public statement claiming responsibility for the attack.

- The **Sector East** is where most of the victims were documented, with 63 violations and abuses affecting 166 victims. This can be explained by 79 victims of recruitment and use of children confirmed this month. The northern triangle of Ouadda, Ouanda-Djallé and Sam-Ouandja, in the Haute-Kotto and Vakaga prefectures, continued to be the most affected area. The armed groups, with the UPC being the main perpetrator, were responsible for most of the violations and victims (20 abuses affecting 114 victims) while State actors were responsible for 20 violations affecting 17 victims. The HRD also documented 21 abuses affecting 34 victims perpetrated by unidentified armed men, cases which are still under investigation, and one abuse perpetrated by the Siriri coalition affecting one victim. The sector was marked this month by the restriction of movement and deprivation of liberty of a group of 24 civilians, including catholic officials by the UPC and the attack of a Fulani family of 12 by unidentified armed men which led to the death of one man. The HRD also documented cases of forced labour of detainees by the OSP in Bria. On 15 March, after one of the detainees escaped, six OSP caught him and reportedly tied a rope around his neck and dragged him to their base. Once there, they tied his hands and feet, beat him with sticks and subjected him to ill-treatment for three hours. He was then forced to resume his forced labour. In addition, the HRD documented a case of torture of a woman by FACA officers in the **Haute-Kotto** prefecture.



Security and political context in March 2023

- During the period under review, the security situation was marked by an increased number of ambushes, attacks and abductions of civilians on the roads and incursions in villages by armed groups combatants in the

whole of the Central African Republic. The prefectures most affected were the **Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto, Mambéré-Kadeï, Ombella M’Poko, Ouaka, Ouham** and **Ouham-Pendé**.

16. In **Sector West**, the security situation was precarious due to the above-mentioned violations on civilians as well as with the resumption of clashes between armed groups and State forces. In the **Nana-Mambéré** prefecture, reports indicated civilian casualties (one dead and nine injured) in a clash between armed groups and States forces. In the **Mambéré-Kadeï**, Anti-Balaka combatants reportedly attacked a village and abducted civilians, spreading fear among the civilian population in the area. Reports indicated that FACA and ISF elements were informed of the attack on the village while conducting patrols in the area but did not take action to protect the civilian population. In the **Ouham** prefecture, CPC combatants threatened civilians in the villages of Gossengue and Bofango (12 km south-east of Bossangoa) in retaliation for their alleged collaboration with the FACA. Reportedly, 2,669 civilians fled the area seeking shelter in Bossangoa. Still in the **Ouham** prefecture, several Anti-Balaka combatants of the CPC under the command of Kossi, tried to attack Bouca to free one of their combatants arrested the previous day and held in custody. The FACA and ISF managed to repel the attack with the presence of the MINUSCA Force. On 16 March, a dozen Anti-Balaka combatants allegedly robbed five members of an international NGO in a village located 19 km from Batangafo. The victims were reportedly brutalized and some of their belongings were taken away.
17. In **Sector Centre**, in the **Ouaka** prefecture, following the 19 March attack of a gold mining company in Chimbolo where nine Chinese miners were executed and two others injured, the Central African government issued a decree on 21 March, establishing a Commission of inquiry to investigate these crimes and identify the perpetrators. Reports indicate that the assailants exclusively targeted the Chinese workers, forced them to lay on the ground and shot them in the head and upper body. The perpetrators fled in the bush, while the two injured victims and the remains of the nine deceased were evacuated to Bangui. In addition, the HRD was informed of the alleged presence of ex-UPC combatants used by the OSP as proxies and known under the nickname “Black Russians” that are committing human rights violations in the Maloum area. They allegedly beat a man to obtain information on the identity of the perpetrators of the attack that killed nine Chinese nationals in Chimbolo. This is in line with a trend the HRD is documenting since October 2021 on the use of proxies by the State agents and the OSP. In the **Basse-Kotto** prefecture, the HRD is documenting an increasing number of violations committed by the FACA and ISF and their proxies. On 10 March, the HRD documented the case of the extrajudicial execution of a 25-year-old man by an ex-Anti-Balaka combatant used as a proxy by the Police. The victim’s family filed a complaint with the Gendarmerie of Alindao and the perpetrator was arrested the same day. As part of MINUSCA’s effort to fight impunity, the HRD is following up with the Prosecutor of Alindao for the perpetrator to be held accountable.
18. In the **Sector East**, the security situation is still deteriorating, especially in the northern triangle of Ouadda, Ouanda-Djallé and Sam-Ouandja, in the **Haute-Kotto** and **Vakaga** prefectures, where the activities of the UPC and the PRNC are affecting the freedom of movement of the population, posing a threat to the protection of civilians. Civilians started to flee the area, scared of the armed groups’ movements. Moreover, the PRNC issued a statement indicating that they would fight the current Government, underlining their opposition to Constitutional reform and the OSP’s exactions in the country. On 18 March, “General” Mahamat Hisseine, alias Damboucha, leader of the *Front Populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique* (FPRC) was arrested in Sam Ouandja, in the **Haute-Kotto** prefecture. He is accused of criminal conspiracy, rebellion and terrorism and is currently detained in Bangui. The criminal proceedings are ongoing. As Mahamat Hisseine is a main leader of the FPRC, reports indicated that armed elements prepared to attack the Gendarmerie brigade to free him. In response to the threat, MINUSCA supported his transfer to Bria and then to Bangui on 20 March. In addition, in the **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture, the security situation is deteriorating following clashes between a self-defence group called *Azande Ani Kpe Gbe* (Azanikpigbe) and the UPC in the Bambouti sub-prefecture. On 3 March, the Azanikpigbe group issued a statement claiming that their mission is to reinstate the peace in the areas where the FACA and ISF are not present. The HRD is monitoring and investigating the situation, in particular regarding the Fulani and Muslim population since this self-defence group explicitly threatened to

take action against them. On 13 March, the HRD documented the killing of three Fulani men and disappearance of six others reportedly committed by the Azanikpigbe self-defence group.

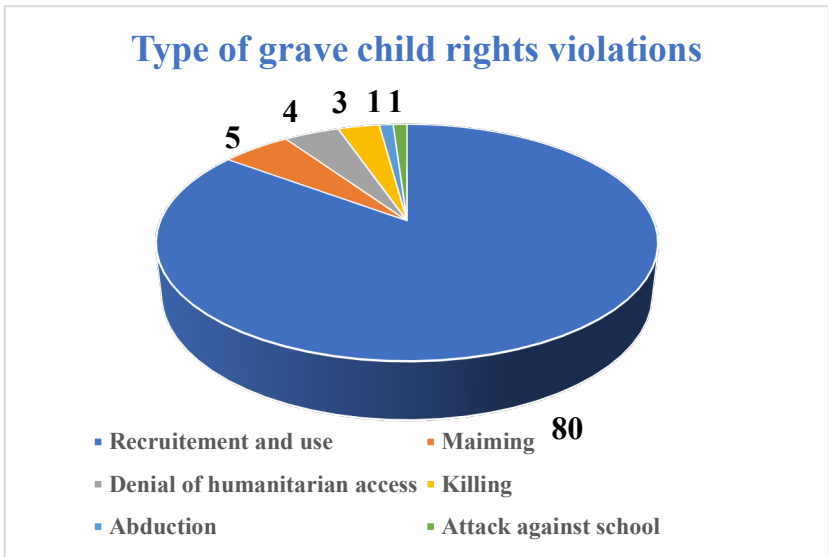
Civic Space

19. In Bangui, the teachers' union decided to resume their strike for a period of 21 days starting on 7 March after having initially been on strike in February due to the increased price of certain basic goods and challenging social and economic conditions in Bangui. The teachers were protesting the unwillingness of the Minister of Public Service to meet with the teachers' union to discuss their living conditions, including their salary. In retaliation, the Minister threatened to suspend the salaries of teachers on strike. In addition, on 8 March, the Central African Government's Spokesperson and Minister of Communication asked for the prosecution of three teacher union leaders, allegedly suspected of having recruited "ill-intentioned individuals" that carried out acts of vandalism in private schools and physically assaulted some students.
20. The HRD is concerned by the restriction of civic space and more specifically regarding the right to freedom of expression following the arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, and confiscation of property of a journalist and coordinator of the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) by FACA elements in Mongoumba, Lobaye prefecture, and OCRB officers in Bangui. He is now being detained at the OCRB in Bangui.
21. In **Bangui**, the security situation is tensed following persistent rumours of CPC combatants' presence in the city, especially at PK 5. The FACA and ISF have increased the number of patrols and search activities in the 3rd and 5th arrondissements of the city, a predominantly Muslim neighbourhood. This community is being disproportionately affected by such operations. The HRD is monitoring the situation and has already documented human rights violations linked to these search operations. For instance, the case of one boy who was killed by stray bullets while national security forces were attempting to arrest three men in the street.

Children in Armed Conflict

22. During the reporting period, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) verified 94 grave child rights violations affecting 88 children (63 boys and 25 girl) a significant increase compared to the previous reporting period in which nine grave violations affecting six children were documented. CPC factions were responsible for 93% of the violations (87), pro-governmental forces (3%) violations (three) and unidentified armed individuals (4%) violations (four), including three by explosive ordnance. The marked increase in grave violations is due to the high number of self-demobilized (79) children, formerly associated with the FPRC, who were identified and screened in the **Haute-Kotto** Prefecture following dialogue carried out by CPU on behalf of the CTFMR. Eighty-two (82) violations occurred outside the reporting period but were only verified during the period under review. One boy was a victim of two violations – abduction and recruitment and use.

23. Violations documented included: recruitment and use (80), killing (three), maiming (five), abduction (one), attacks against schools (one) and denial of humanitarian access (four). CPC factions committed (87) violations: FPRC (81), UPC (four), Anti-Balaka (one) and 3R (one); pro-governmental forces (three): FACA (one), Anti-Balaka proxy (one) and unknown proxy (one); and unidentified armed individuals



(four), including three by explosive ordnance. The **Haute-Kotto** was the most affected prefecture with (79) violations, followed by the **Ouaka** (seven), the **Nana-Mambéré** (three), the **Mbomou** (two), and the **Haut-Mbomou**, the **Ouham-Fafa** and the **Ouham-Pendé** with one each.

24. During the reporting period, the CTFMR screened a list of 114 self-demobilized children in **Haute-Kotto** prefecture – of which 79 children (56 boys and 23 girls) were verified to have been formerly associated to the FPRC. The children will enter a reintegration program implemented by a child protection partner. The list was provided by the FPRC following dialogue carried out by CPU on behalf of the CTFMR.
25. In addition, CPS met with FACA leaderships in **Mbomou**, **Nana-Grébizi** and **Nana-Mambéré** prefectures to continue advocating for the appointment of focal points with whom they can work to address child protection concerns and discuss organization of training/education for FACA elements. The FACA leaders promised to revert regarding the issues raised.
26. CPS met with protection partners to follow-up on 119 children formerly associated with the UPC and Anti-Balaka who were screened by the CTFMR in August 2022 in the **Haute-Kotto** prefecture. Partners informed that 95 children have been entrusted to a protection partner and 24 will be reunified with their families. Also, CPS met with protection partners in the **Ouaka** prefecture to get updates on the situation of 16 self-demobilized children, formerly associated with UPC in the **Ouaka**, who were screened by the CTFMR and the Government’s social affairs department in February 2023. The partners informed that 12 children have been reunified with their families and family tracing is ongoing for the remaining four children.

Act to Protect Campaign

As part of the “**Act to Protect**” campaign, **532 peacekeepers** (428 men and 104 women) were trained on the protection of children during armed conflict, particularly on the monitoring and reporting of grave violations. Similar trainings and sensitizations were conducted for **1,848** (990 men and 858 women) **members and leaders of communities, local authorities, national defense and security forces, judiciary, INGOs and NGOs.**

Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

27. In March, the HRD documented only one confirmed case of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) (rape) by an Anti-Balaka combatant affecting one 13-year-old girl in the **Mbomou** prefecture. In January, the girl was sent to the field to pick up cassava leaves. On her way back home, she was intercepted by an Anti-Balaka combatant who threatened her with his knife and raped her. She received medical care two weeks later. She didn’t file a complaint with the authorities.
28. It is worth noting that CRSV tends to be underreported due to the fear of retaliation, as well as stigmatization, which may impact the HRD’s access to victims. Similar to the trends in previous months, the HRD did not document any cases of CRSV against boys and men.

Human Rights Promotion and Capacity-Building

29. This month, the HRD organised 213 activities, in some instances with partners, on human rights and international humanitarian law in 12 prefectures,¹ benefitting 5,317 individuals (of whom 2,575 were women), including representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs), State actors, detainees, and religious leaders.

¹ The prefectures are as follows: Bamingui-Bangoran; Bangui; Haute-Kotto; Haut-Mbomou; Mambéré-Kadéï; Mbomou; Nana-Grébizi; Nana-Mambéré; Ombella M’Poko; Ouaka; Ouham-Pendé; and Vakaga.

30. These activities included 52 awareness campaigns, which reached 3,929 beneficiaries (including 2,209 women), including internally displaced persons (IDPs), civil society organisations, community leaders, detainees, State authorities, local human rights fora and the civilian population. In addition, 16 capacity-building workshops were organized benefitting 378 individuals (including 96 women) from civil society organizations, local human rights fora, community leaders, and the local population. The HRD also conducted one training for community leaders and 16 trainings for State actors, involving 405 individuals (including 63 women). Fifteen of these trainings were carried out for 380 FACA and FSI (including 51 women), comprising the Gendarmerie and the Police. The HRD is organising activities to strengthen knowledge on human rights law and international humanitarian law, as well as on specific topics such as human rights and elections, CRSV and child protection as a means of enhancing the protective environment in the CAR.

31. In March, the HRD conducted 27 monitoring visits of detention centres in 14 prefectures.² During these visits, the HRD documented 133 victims of unlawful detention, including cases in which the detainees were being held past the legal limits for custody, as above mentioned. During its monitoring visits, the HRD interviewed detainees and advocated about concerns regarding respect of their human rights. In the Berberati prison (**Mambéré-Kadéï**), the HRD pleaded for the release of a minor. In Bangui, the HRD’s advocacy led to the release of a woman arbitrarily arrested and detained at the OCRB. In Kaga Bandoro, in the **Nana-Grébizi** prefecture, the HRD documented the case of two women detained in an overcrowded cell with men. Following its advocacy efforts, the two women were transferred to another cell now reserved exclusively for women. The HRD also continues to advocate for humane conditions of detention throughout the CAR.

Transitional Justice

On 23 and 24 March, the **Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR)** held a roundtable to update its partners on the implementation of its mandate. The CVJRR’s triennial plan for 2023-2025 and the Commission’s priorities for 2023 were discussed. Up until the roundtable, the focus of the CVJRR’s work had been mostly internal with the drafting of its organisational tools and the capacity-building of its commissioners. In 2023, the CVJRR will start its substantial work with the organisation of pilot audiences, depositions, and public hearings in Bangui and Berberati.

32. In **Bangui**, from 23 to 25 March, the HRD provided technical and logistical support on organizing a workshop to a consortium of six Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)³ working on prevention of hate speech and incitement to violence. The HRD facilitated a session on methodology to provide the consortium with adequate tools for compiling their findings to prevent hate speech and incitement to violence. The findings were collected during 14 field visits, during which they raised awareness of targeted populations (women, youth, students, media, local communities, and schoolteachers) and established focal points. At the end of the workshop, the participants signed an Act of Commitment to serve as an advocacy tool for continued engagement and promotion of a “National Plan on the prevention of incitement to hatred and violence” and committed to strengthen their collaboration with the national institutions. In addition, on 30 and 31 March, the HRD supported the organisation of a capacity-building workshop by three organisations from a consortium on the rights of minorities. In total, 40 participants, including 17 women, representing local authorities, CSOs, and targeted minority groups (Fulani, Pygmies, people living with disabilities and Muslims) discussed the main findings of three missions organised by the consortium in Birao, Berberati and Bambari. The HRD

² The prefectures are as follows: Bamingui-Bangoran; Bangui; Basse-Kotto; Haute-Kotto; Kémo; Mambéré-Kadéï; Mbomou; Nana-Grébizi; Nana-Mambéré; Ombella M’Poko; Ouaka; Ouham; Ouham-Pendé; and Vakaga.

³ The six CSOs are the following : Action des Universitaires pour les Droits de l’Homme (AUDH), Organisation des Mamans de Centrafrique pour le Développement (OMDC), Women Act For Living Together (WALT), Réseau des Journalistes pour les Droits de l’homme (RJDH), Réseau des journalistes sensibles au conflit et aux messages de haine (RJSCMH), Sud Sans Frontières (SSF)

facilitated a session on rights of minorities. A set of recommendations to the Government and key stakeholders in implementing rights of minorities in the CAR was issued at the end of the workshop.

33. In **Bangui**, on 26 and 27 March, the HRD started the first capacity-building workshop for members of CSOs on economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR). Twenty-six representatives from CSOs, including 13 women, participated in this training, aimed at strengthening their knowledge of ESCR and how to monitor them, as well as highlighting the State’s obligation to implement and respect them. Participants welcomed the HRD initiative and expressed commitment to monitor ESCR and to include them in their advocacy and engagement with the authorities. Of note, this activity is part of a series of six planned capacity-building workshops to strengthen the CSOs’ role in monitoring ESCR.
34. In **Bangui**, from 16 to 17 March, the *Haute Autorité chargée de la Bonne Gouvernance* (HABG), with the support of HRD, organized a workshop for 40 members of political parties, civil society and women’s organizations to educate them on its mandate pertaining to promoting transparency in management of public funds and services and promotion of economic, social and cultural rights. This activity is part of the HRD’s strategy to empower national institutions by ensuring their visibility and raising awareness on their mandate that will contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights. The activity was the third out of five that are planned for the HABG. Two have already been held in Bangui and two others are planned in Bambari and Bouar.

Human Rights Due Diligence

35. In March, in the context of its implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP), the HRD conducted 26 risk assessments for MINUSCA’s support to the National Defence and Security Forces as well as Members of Parliament. The HRDDP Secretariat conducted human rights background checks for a total of 355 beneficiaries including 325 ISF (187 Police officers and 138 Gendarmes), 16 FACA, 12 officers from the taxation unit, Water and Forestry Ministry and agents from the national anti-fraud unit as well as two Members of Parliament. Beneficiaries of support that underwent the risk assessments were provided financial, logistical, operational, and technical support including air transportation and trainings. Among the 355 persons screened, four were excluded by the Secretariat for having been involved in the committing of human rights violations. All the assessments were evaluated to have low or medium risk.
36. These verifications enabled UNPOL and UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to organize 13 training sessions for the ISF and FACA on: public security, rapid intervention procedures and techniques, road safety and accident reporting, community policing, preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, forensic services, computer science and information technology, information collection and exploitation, and weapons and ammunition management.
37. In addition, UNPOL, the Force, UNMAS and MINUSCA Political Affairs Division also contributed by providing support in transporting FACA, FSI and Members of Parliament to six localities in the country. The Mission equally approved financial support to the FACA and ISF in charge of securing the demobilizing operations (DDR) in Bambari in the **Ouaka** prefecture as well as for the rehabilitation of the building of the *Bangassou Brigade Territoriale de la Gendarmerie* in the **Mbomou** prefecture.
38. Finally, from 27 to 31 March, the HRD delivered four sessions on the HRDDP benefitting 86 members of CSOs, including 33 women, in Bangui. The session addressed human rights concepts, HRDDP principles, the structure of HRDDP in MINUSCA, members of the HRDDP Task Force and their role in the effective implementation of the policy, the management of risk assessments and implementation of mitigating measures.