

October – December 2023

HUMAN RIGHTS QUARTERLY BRIEF ON THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HIGHLIGHTS

- In Q4 2023, MINUSCA HRD documented 860 human rights violations and abuses, affecting 1,199 civilians: a 53% increase in violations and 39% increase in victims compared to Q3 2023.
- Among armed groups, the Azande Ani Kpi Gbe were responsible for a majority of human rights abuses (181) and the UPC for the highest number of victims (180). Among State actors, FACA were responsible for the most violations (86) and the Gendarmerie for the most victims (170).
- Recurrent violations were related to the right to physical and mental integrity (20%), the right to the liberty and fair trial (18%), the right to life (14%), the right to property (14%) and CRSV (14%).
- At least 137 civilians, including 101 men, 21 women, 11 boys and four minors whose gender could not be determined were killed (an 83% increase compared to Q3 2023). The Azande Ani Kpi Gbe and UPC armed groups were responsible for most of these killings.
- At least 214 children including 158 boys, 55 girls and one group of minors (sex undetermined) were recruited and used in the conflict. The anti-Balaka armed group affiliated to the CPC was responsible for most of these victims.
- Haut-Mbomou was the most affected prefecture in terms of human rights violations and abuses (282) and victims (241).

SIGNIFICANT HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

From 1 October to 31 December 2023, the national authorities with support from partners including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) undertook various positive initiatives to enhance respect for human rights in the country.

On 11 December, as part of the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Central African Republic (CAR) Government committed to ensuring greater engagement with the human rights treaty-body and reporting mechanisms, establishing a national mechanism on the prevention of torture and leveraging the national human rights policy to meet its national and international human rights obligations. The Ministry of Justice collaborated with MINUSCA to organize local human rights forums, while the University of Bangui and the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms held capacity-building and awareness-raising sessions for 3,500 individuals (including about 30% of women) in 14 localities across the country.

From 15 to 17 November 2023, the Minister-Adviser of the Presidency of the Republic in charge of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) with support of the Office of SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict and MINUSCA, organised a high-level roundtable on fighting impunity related to CRSV, aiming to establish a national roadmap to strengthen the judiciary in enhancing accountability for CRSV.

During the quarter under review, authorities continued to grant access to the Human Rights Division (HRD) to monitor detention centres and facilities and engage with relevant authorities on corrective measures. MINUSCA welcomes steps taken by some authorities to improve detention conditions and ensure respect of due process. For example, following advocacy by the HRD, at least 42 victims who had been arbitrarily detained were released in Bangui, Bossangoa, Ndélé, Bambari, Obo and Bangassou. Meanwhile, the return of the Prosecutor and President of the *Tribunal de Grande Instance* of Ndélé is expected to significantly contribute to ongoing efforts to fight against impunity and enhance respect for human rights, especially regarding arbitrary detention.

In Bangui, the first session of the Military Court opened on 30 October and ended on 17 November. Of note, this session was the first to occur since 2021. A total of 20 hearings were held with 23 accused receiving sentences ranging from three months suspended sentences to 20 years of hard labour. An extraordinary criminal session of the Court of Appeal of Bangui also started on 4 December.¹ Fifty-one (51) trials were held. Ensuring the procedural regularity of these sessions will be key in strengthening the rule of law and ongoing efforts to fight against impunity in CAR.

In line with its strategic support to national institutions, the HRD supported the participation of the CAR government in the 54th session of the Human Rights Council from 9 to 13 October 2023 in Geneva (Switzerland).

¹ The session ended on 17 January 2024.

CONTEXT

Despite these significant human rights developments, there is still a need for concerted efforts to address security challenges that continue to impact on the protection of civilians and the full realisation of human rights. The reporting period was marked by military operations of security and defence forces and other security personnel (OSP) against armed groups, clashes between armed groups and increased ethnic tensions at times related to transhumance.

In the **Equateur** region,² clashes between armed groups and FACA and OSP in Nana-Mambéré and Mambéré-Kadeï prefectures resulted in killings, looting, hostage taking and ill-treatment of civilians. In Yadé region³ on 2 November, clashes between UPC elements and FACA in Moyenne Sido and Mbo localities, Ouham-Fafa prefecture, resulted in the killing of two civilians and the destruction of shops and homes. On 24 November, several attacks by UPC armed elements on FACA positions in the same town resulted in the death of a child who was hit by a stray bullet.

Furthermore, the activities of armed groups continue to adversely impact the security and human rights situation. On 21 December, armed elements, including men associated with the 3R, attacked Nzakoundou village, Lim-Pendé prefecture, amid an increase in ethnic tensions in the area. The HRD documented at least 18 civilians killed (including two women and two minors) while four others were

injured as the assailants looted the village and burned down 900 houses. In addition, the incursions of 3R elements in the localities of Sakamadji, Amada Gaza and in a mining site 7 km from Beina, in Mambéré-Kadeï prefecture led to the killing, ill-treatment and abduction of civilians.

In the **Kaga** region,⁴ civilians and humanitarian staff continued to be subjected to abuses by armed groups in Nana-Gribizi and Ouham-Fafa prefectures and more specifically on the Batangafo-Ouandago, Batangafo-Ouogo, Dekoa-Bouca and Ndélé-Diki axes. Armed elements affiliated to the CPC and anti-Balaka were implicated in killings, abductions, ill treatment, and appropriation of property. These incidents directly impact the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the area thereby affecting critical services such as health and education.

In the **Fertit** region,⁵ Haute Kotto prefecture, elements of the UPC continued to attack civilians in the Ouadda, Sam-Ouandja and Ouanda-Djallé triangle, where cases of killing, rape, abduction, attacks on physical integrity, appropriation and destruction of property, child recruitment and forced labour were documented. As a result of these incidents, the local population often fled the area.

In the **Haut-Oubangui** region,⁶ particularly in the Haut Mbomou prefecture, a pattern of abuses against the civilian population implicating UPC, Azande Ani Kpi Gbe and anti-Balaka elements was

² For the purpose of this report, the Equateur region comprises Sangha-Mbaéré, Mambéré-Kadeï, Nana-Mambéré and Mambéré prefectures.

³ For the purpose of this report, the Yade region comprises Ouham, Ouham-Fafa, Ouham-Pendé, and Lim-Pendé prefectures.

⁴ For the purpose of this report, the Kaga region comprises Kemo, Nana-Gribizi, and Ouaka prefectures (figures of the Ouham-Fafa are included in the Yadé region under the Ouham prefecture).

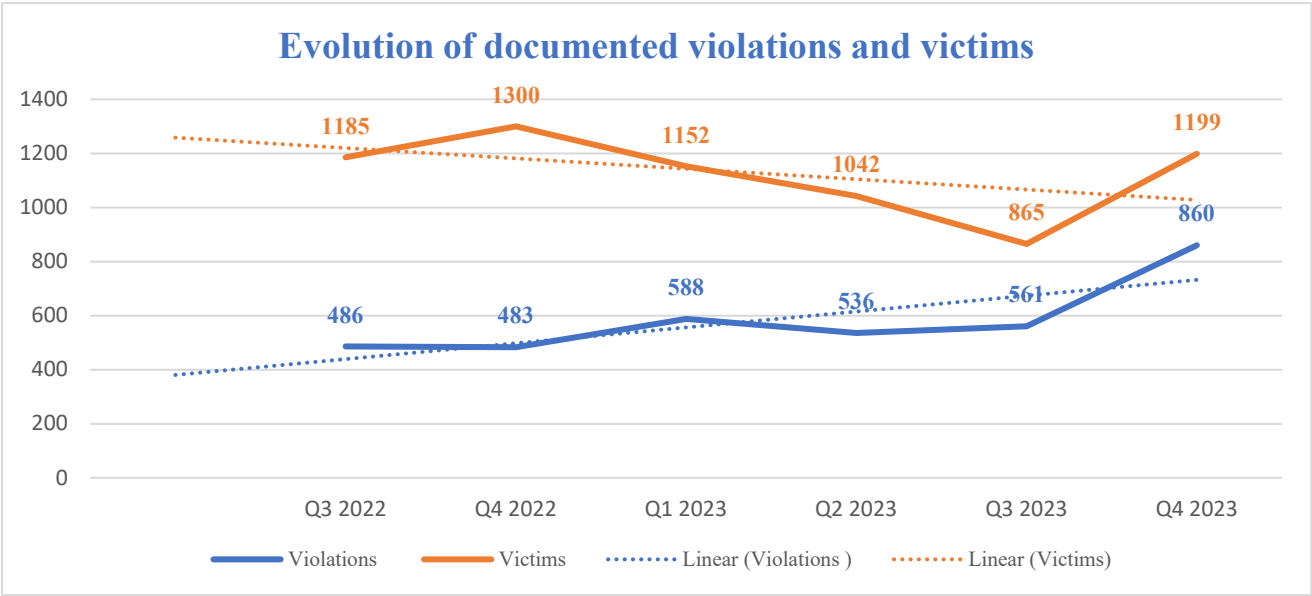
⁵ For the purpose of this report, the Fertit region comprises Bamingui-Bangoran Haute-Kotto and Vakaga prefectures.

⁶ For the purpose of this report, the Haut-Oubangui comprises Basse-Kotto, Haut-Mbomou and Mbomou prefectures.

documented. Cases of CRSV, abduction, recruitment and use of children and ill-treatment were reported. In addition, there were concerns over the potential for renewed confrontation between Azande Ani Kpi Gbe and UPC armed groups in Mboki which may lead to another wave of displacement of persons who returned to Mboki following the clashes of 8 May and 20 June 2023. In the **Plateaux region**, Lobaye prefecture, the 3R was involved in cases of killing, abduction and the destruction of property particularly in the localities of Noukane, Boda, and Mato.

Meanwhile the beginning of the transhumance season has heightened ethnic tensions and the need for concrete measures to enhance social cohesion and to prevent and respond to instances of violence between farmer and herder communities. There were increased concerns in the Yadé, Plateaux, Kaga and Haut-Oubangui regions. For instance, on 22 October in Bonaguero (20 km from Boganangone), **Plateaux region**, farmer-herder clashes led to the death of two farmers and 12 Fulani herders. On 9 November, in Paoua, ethnic tensions led to the destruction of shops in the central market, about 20 homes and four cars.

GENERAL TRENDS



During the fourth quarter of 2023, the HRD documented a **53% increase** in human rights violations and abuses, and a **39% increase** in the number of victims, compared to the preceding quarter. Between October and December 2023, the

HRD verified **860** human rights violations and abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL) that affected **1,199** civilian victims.⁷ Armed groups signatories to the *Accord Politique pour la Paix et la Réconciliation* (APPR-RCA) were responsible for **36%**

⁷ Since January 2022, in accordance with OHCHR methodology, the HRD records all the human rights violations that occurred during a single incident and against different victims. Since July 2022, the Division also counts all the violations per victim (multiple violations). Additionally, since June 2022, the HRD systematically reports on cases of arbitrary detention by State authorities that exceed the legal custody time limit, as well as unlawful conditions of detention.

of the human rights abuses (307) and for 39% of the victims (463). State actors were responsible for 36% of the human rights violations (310) and for 43% of the victims (516).

Of note, most violations (**176 violations affecting 243 victims**) are related to the right to physical and mental integrity mainly ill-treatment (114 violations affecting 167 victims). The majority of victims (**390**) was related to the right to liberty and fair trial, mainly arbitrary arrest and detention.

Other actors, including armed groups non-signatories to the **APPR-RCA**, were responsible for 28% of abuses (243) and 19% of victims (225).

MINUSCA noted a significant increase (61%) in the number of abuses committed by armed groups

signatories to the **APPR-RCA**, mostly due to the **abuses perpetrated by the UPC (177 violations affecting 180 victims)**. Similarly, there was a significant increase (200%) in the number of abuses committed by other actors, including armed groups non-signatories to the APPR-RCA, mostly due to the abuses perpetrated by the Azande Ani Kpi Gbe (181 abuses affecting 125 victims).

Most violations and victims of CRSV were documented in the **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture (64 violations affecting 59 victims) perpetrated concomitantly with forced recruitment and use of children and ill-treatment. Most of the victims of forced recruitment and use of children were reported in the **Mbomou** prefecture (11 violations affecting 127 victims).

VIOLATIONS

A majority of violations and abuses were related to the **right to physical and mental integrity** including torture, ill-treatment, maiming, and injuries (**176**); the **right to liberty and a fair trial**, including arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as conditions of detention that failed to comply with national and international standards for the treatment of detainees (**159**); **right to property (121)**, **right to life (121)**; and **cases of CRSV (117)**.

During the reporting period, **243** persons (including 145 men, 42 women, 22 boys, 26 girls and eight groups of collective victims including one group of children of indeterminate gender), were victims of violations of the **right to physical and mental integrity** indicating a **33%** increase in the number of victims and **60%** increase in the number of violations compared to the previous quarter. It is worth noting that violations/abuses of the right to physical and mental integrity represent **20%** of total violations and abuses. With regards to specific elements, ill-treatment (**114** violations affecting **167**

victims) was the most common type of violation in this category, followed by maiming and injuries (**30** violations affecting **39** victims).

State actors were responsible of **36%** of the violations of the right to physical and mental integrity and **35%** of victims. Of note is the case of 1 November, in Paoua, **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture, where a 67-year-old man accused of witchcraft was beaten by eight FACA elements in front of the city hall. One of the FACA elements stood on the face of the victim as he was being beaten with sticks by other elements.

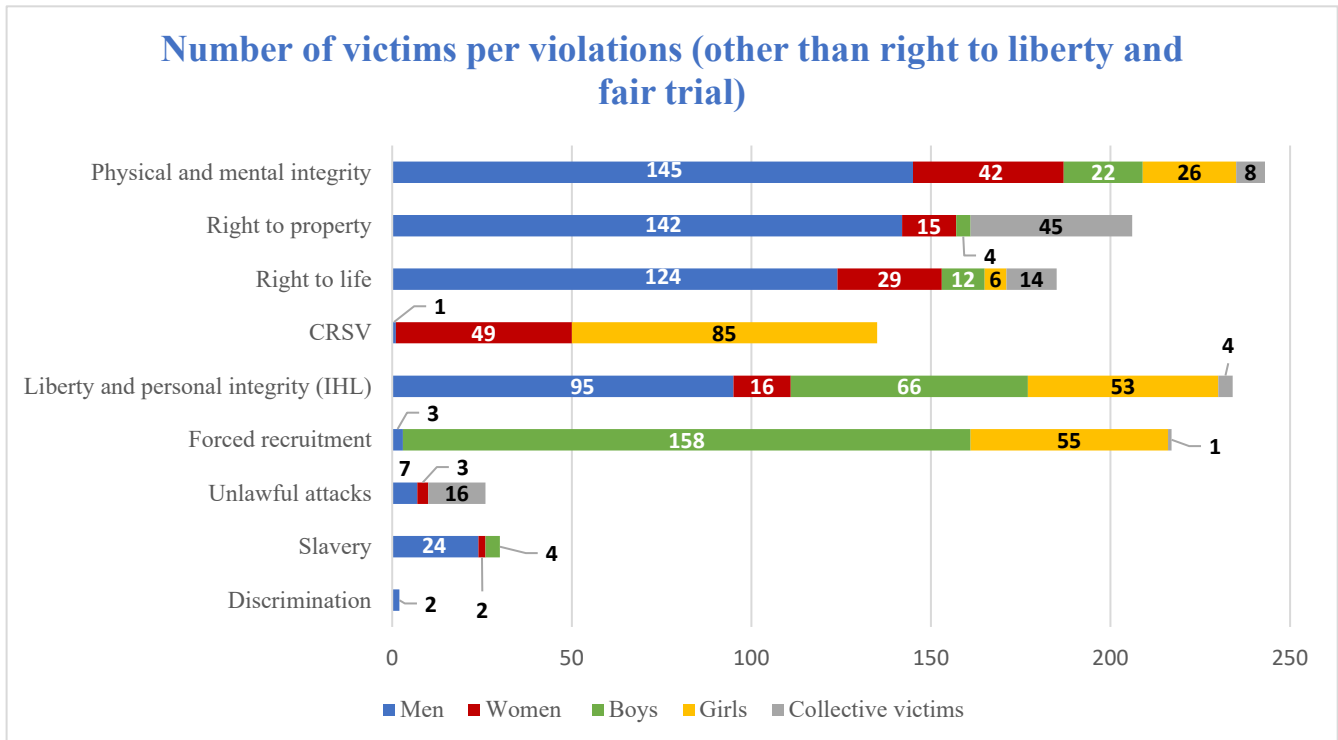
Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for **35%** of violations of right to physical and mental integrity (including ill-treatments, maiming and injuries and threats to physical and mental integrity) and **39%** of victims. Most violations occurred during sexual violence including rape and attacks to seize property from the population. For example, on 28 November, in Aigbando, (PK65 north of Bria). **Haute-Kotto** prefecture, CPC/UPC elements threatened, ill-

treated, and appropriated the property of a 24-year-old man in Aigbando. He was accused of being an anti-Balaka element and was asked to name others in Aigbando and its environs. When he denied the accusations, he was fined 500,000 XAF (about 830 USD) and flogged publicly. The victim paid 40,000 XAF (about 67 USD) following threats to kill him made by the CPC elements.

The right to liberty and fair trial represented 18% of the total number of human rights violations, (including arbitrary arrests and detentions) and 33% of the victims. This is an increase of 6% in the number of violations and 20% in the number of victims compared to the previous quarter. In most cases, detainees were held beyond the legal time limit and/or subjected to inhumane conditions of detention which do not meet minimum national and international standards. During the reporting period, 390 persons were victims of violations of the right to liberty and fair trial, all by State actors (including 333 men, seven women, 22 boys, five girls and 23 groups of collective victims).

CRSV accounted for 14% of the total number of human rights violations and 11% of victims. During the period under review, at least 117 cases of **CRSV** affecting 135 victims (49 women, 85 girls and one man) were documented indicating a 160% increase in violations and a 73 % increase in victims compared to the previous quarter. Of note, the significant increase in CRSV cases is mostly due to abuses committed by the **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** (38 cases of CRSV affecting 21 victims) and **UPC** (34 cases of CRSV affecting 44 victims) in the **Haut-Mbomou** and **Haute-Kotto** prefectures. Most of these abuses occurred before the period under review but were verified and documented in October, November and December 2023. **Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA, other actors, and State actors** were responsible respectively for 50%, 37% and 14% of CRSV cases.

Specifically, 91 rape cases affecting 130 victims, mostly girls (84) were documented with 48 % in **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture involving the **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** (21 abuses affecting 20 victims) and **UPC** (19 violations affecting 31 victims). Across the



entire country, armed groups and more specifically **UPC** elements were responsible for the rape of **41** victims (**28** abuses), **32** of whom were girls. For example, on 22 October, in **Kpokpo, Nana-Gribizi** prefecture, six armed elements affiliated to the CPC raped and illtreated two women in a farm where the victims had gone to harvest yams. They were beaten with sticks and ropes before they were raped until they lost consciousness. They later received medical and psychosocial care. Similarly, the **3R** elements raped 18 victims (13 violations) including seven girls. Moreover, **FACA** were responsible for eight cases of rape affecting seven victims, five of whom were girls. It is worth noting that despite the aforementioned figures, sexual violence cases are still underreported.

Violations of the right to property represented **14%** of the human rights violations and abuses (**121** violations) affecting a total of **206** victims (**142** men, **15** women, **four** boys and **45** groups of collective victims). **Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA** were responsible for **45%** of these abuses affecting **116** victims and State actors **28%** affecting **38** victims. **Other actors** were responsible for **26%**

of the violations and abuses affecting **52 victims** with **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** elements responsible for **13 violations** affecting **17 victims**. Most of the abuses of the right to property were perpetrated by **UPC** (**31** abuses affecting **70 victims**) and **FACA** (**18** abuses affecting **19 victims**).

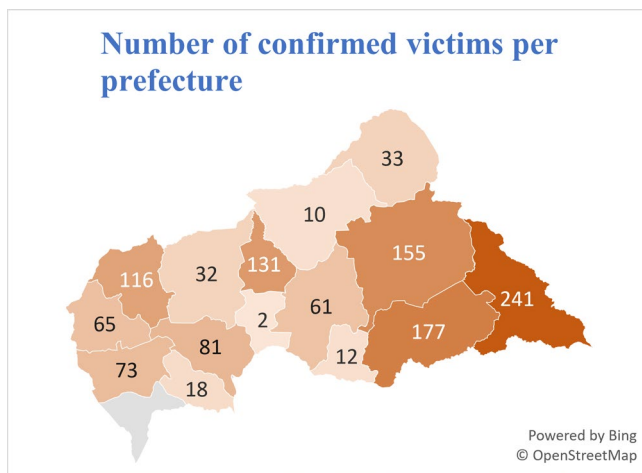
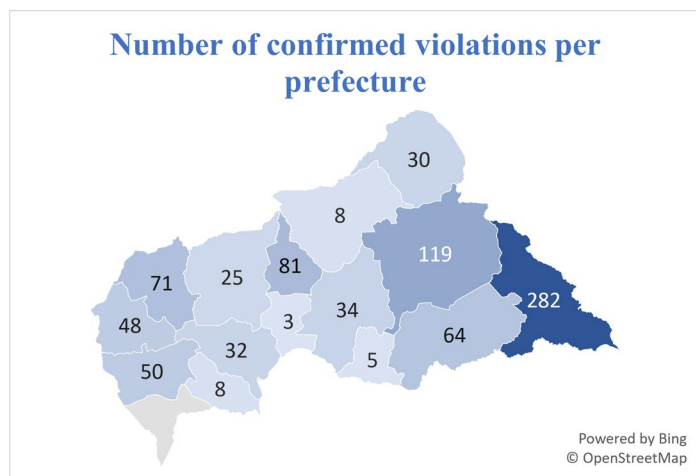
The HRD documented **46** cases of **recruitment and use of children** affecting **214** victims and **17** cases of **forced marriage** affecting **16** victims. Most of these violations occurred outside the reporting period but were verified and documented in the fourth quarter.

Of note, the Azande Ani Kpi Gbe was involved in a pattern of abducting children on their way to school or from their homes at night and threatening them with death if they refuse to join their ranks. Once in their base, they were beaten, "vaccinated"⁸ and forced to work on the base and participate in military training. Girls were also beaten, "vaccinated" and given "husbands". Most of the girls interviewed had been victims of forced marriage with some having been abducted several times.

GEOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Most of the human rights violations and abuses, as well as victims, were documented in the

Haut-Oubangui region (**351** violations affecting **430** victims) an increase of 328% in terms of



⁸ Scarification process rubbing a product on their wounds aimed at making them violent.

violations and 189% in terms of victims. This increase is largely due to the high number of abuses (181) perpetrated by the **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** affecting **125** victims and **UPC** committing **(98)** violations affecting **96** victims in the **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture. The increase also results from the recruitment and use of children by the **anti-Balaka affiliated to the CPC** in **Mbomou** prefecture (**81** children). The violations and abuses documented in **Haut-Oubangui** region included rape (**55** violations affecting **84** victims), abductions (**54** violations affecting **124** victims), killings (**47** violations affecting **71** victims), ill-treatment (**49** violations affecting **51** victims), recruitment and use of children (**41** violations affecting **206** victims), appropriation of property (**25** violations affecting **30** victims) and forced marriage (**17** violations affecting **16** victims).

In the **Fertit** region, the HRD documented an increase in terms of number of violations and victims (**157** violations affecting **198** victims) compared to the previous quarter (**128** violations affecting **157** victims). Documented violations included, among others, violations of the right to liberty and fair trial (**24** violations affecting **50** victims), ill-treatment (**21** violations affecting **58** victims) and CRSV (**12** violations and **16** victims). In addition, **eight** cases of forced labour affecting **25** victims were documented. **UPC** was involved in most abuses (**68**) affecting **65** victims followed by **unidentified armed men (22)** affecting **21** victims. **FACA** were responsible for **19** violations affecting **18** victims. Within the Fertit region, the prefecture of **Haute-Kotto** was the most affected with **119** violations affecting **155** victims.

In **Kaga** region, as in the previous quarter, the HRD documented **118** violations and abuses. But the number of victims decreased (**194** compared to **238** in the previous quarter). Most violations and abuses were related to liberty and fair trial (**44** violations affecting **108** victims), ill-treatment (**13** violations

affecting **15** victims) and CRSV (**12** violations affecting **11** victims). The violations and abuses were mostly attributable to **FACA** (**17** violations affecting **13** victims). Of note, when acting jointly with **either the OSP** or Internal Security Forces (ISF), **FACA** elements were responsible for **eight** additional violations affecting **nine** victims. With regards to armed groups, the **UPC** committed the most abuses (**11** affecting **19** victims). The prefecture of **Nana-Gribizi** was the most affected, with **81** violations and abuses affecting **131** victims.

In the **Equateur** region, an increase was documented in terms of number of violations (**98** violations compared to **73** in the previous quarter). Likewise, there was an increase in the number of victims (**138** compared to **95** in the previous quarter). Violations and abuses included, among others, violation of the right to liberty and fair trial (**31** violations affecting **74** victims), ill-treatment (**11** violations affecting **13** victims) and killings (**nine** violations affecting **nine** victims). The **FACA**, acting alone, was responsible for most of the violations (**17** affecting **14** victims). With **OSP**, they committed nine violations affecting nine victims. The Gendarmerie was involved in **14** violations affecting **40** victims. Violations committed by **OSP** alone increased during the period under review (**eight** violations affecting **seven** victims) as against three violations affecting three victims in the previous quarter. This is due to the cases of violation of physical and mental integrity, appropriation or destruction of property, forced labour and recruitment and use of children perpetrated by the **OSP** and documented in the localities of Baoro, Wantiguira, Kpocité and Bouar. Although the number of abuses perpetrated by **armed group signatories to the APPR-RCA** has decreased during the reporting period, their violent attacks continue to affect the civilian population in the region. On 7 November, near Pâté, Nana-Mambéré prefecture, **3R** and anti-Balaka elements killed three men, including a gendarme, his aide-de-

camp and his 20-year-old son, and wounded a woman and a four-year-old boy. The prefecture of **Mambéré-Kadeï** was the most affected with **50** violations affecting **73** victims. The town of **Bouar** alone recorded **14** violations affecting **25** victims, mainly arbitrary detentions.

The **Yadé** region witnessed a decrease in number of violations (**96**) compared to the previous quarter (113) but an increase in number of victims (**148**) **as against** 128 in the previous quarter. Most cases of human rights violations and abuses documented were related to rights to liberty and fair trial (**18** violations affecting **45** victims), ill-treatments (**16** violations affecting **26** victims) and CRSV (**16** violations affecting 20 victims). Despite a decrease⁹ in the number of CRSV cases in the region (**18** cases of CRSV affecting **22** victims were documented in the previous quarter), the **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture continues to experience numerous cases of rape of women and girls by the **3R** with **15** cases affecting **19** victims (compared to 13 cases affecting 18 victims in the previous quarter). Of note was the incident on 30 October, near Koundjili, along the Paoua-Taley axis, **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture during which 3R elements raped a 21-year-old woman. The woman was in the fields with her younger brother when five 3R elements arrived, beat her up, tied her down, and one of the men raped her in front of her younger brother. In two similar incidents along the Paoua-Taley axis on 2 November, two 3R armed elements raped an 18-year-old woman near Liya (about 45 km south of Paoua). In another instance, seven 3R elements captured the victim in the fields, raped her and stole the sum of 20,000 XAF (approximately 33 USD). Both victims received medical care. It is worth noting that the HRD also documented nine extrajudicial or summary execution and other killings in Yadé region, affecting 29 victims and attributed mostly to 3R and Anti-Balaka elements affiliated to

the CPC. The violations and abuses in the region were mostly attributable to the **3R** group (**43** violations affecting **63** victims), and the **Gendarmerie** (12 violations affecting 22 victims). The **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture was the most affected prefecture with **71** violations affecting **116** victims. Paoua alone recorded **18** violations affecting **40** victims, mainly arbitrary detentions.

In the **Plateau** region, the HRD documented **13** violations/abuses affecting **22** victims which represents a decrease compared to the previous quarter (**23** violations and **37** victims). Most cases were related to the appropriation or destruction of property (**four** affecting **four** victims), abductions (**two** affecting **four** victims), ill-treatments (**two** affecting **two** victims) and killing (**one** affecting **six** victims). The **3R** armed group was involved in most abuses (**eight** affecting **18** victims) and **FACA** (**four** violations affecting **two** victims). The prefecture of **Lobaye** was the most affected with **eight** violations affecting **18** victims. The town of **Noukané** alone recorded **five** violations affecting **13** victims due to killing, maiming and injuries, abductions and appropriation and destruction of property of civilians committed by 3R elements. As an illustration, in September 2023, 3R elements abducted two children from a Fulani herder community and asked for a ransom of 1,000,000 XAF (approximately 1,600 USD). The Fulani community sold several oxen to pay the ransom and secure the release of the two children. A few days later, the same perpetrators returned to the camp and abducted two other children and requested the payment of the same ransom. As the herders could not pay, the armed elements searched the premises and seized the sum of 300,000 XAF (around 480 USD). The children were later released. On 22 October, the same perpetrators returned to the herders' camp and demanded the payment of 2,000,000 XAF (around 3,200 USD). As the herders

⁹ A decrease in documented CRSV cases does not necessarily indicate a decrease in CRSV as CRSV cases are still largely underreported.

refused, one of the armed elements killed six civilians and wounded two others. The latter received medical care.

In **Bangui, Bas-Oubangui** region, an increase was noted in of the number of violations (27 violations in the current quarter compared to 24 violations in the previous one) and in victims (77 victims in the current quarter and 62 in the previous one) largely due to the high number of violations of rights to liberty and fair trial (17 violations affecting 74 victims). For example, on 17 November, in Bangui, a 31-year-old man, arrested in Bossangoa and later transferred to Bangui on 3 November, died in detention. In Bangui, the 31-year-old man was previously held in custody at the *Office central de repression du banditisme* (OCRB) before he was transferred to *Camp de Roux* on 16 November following a remand order. The

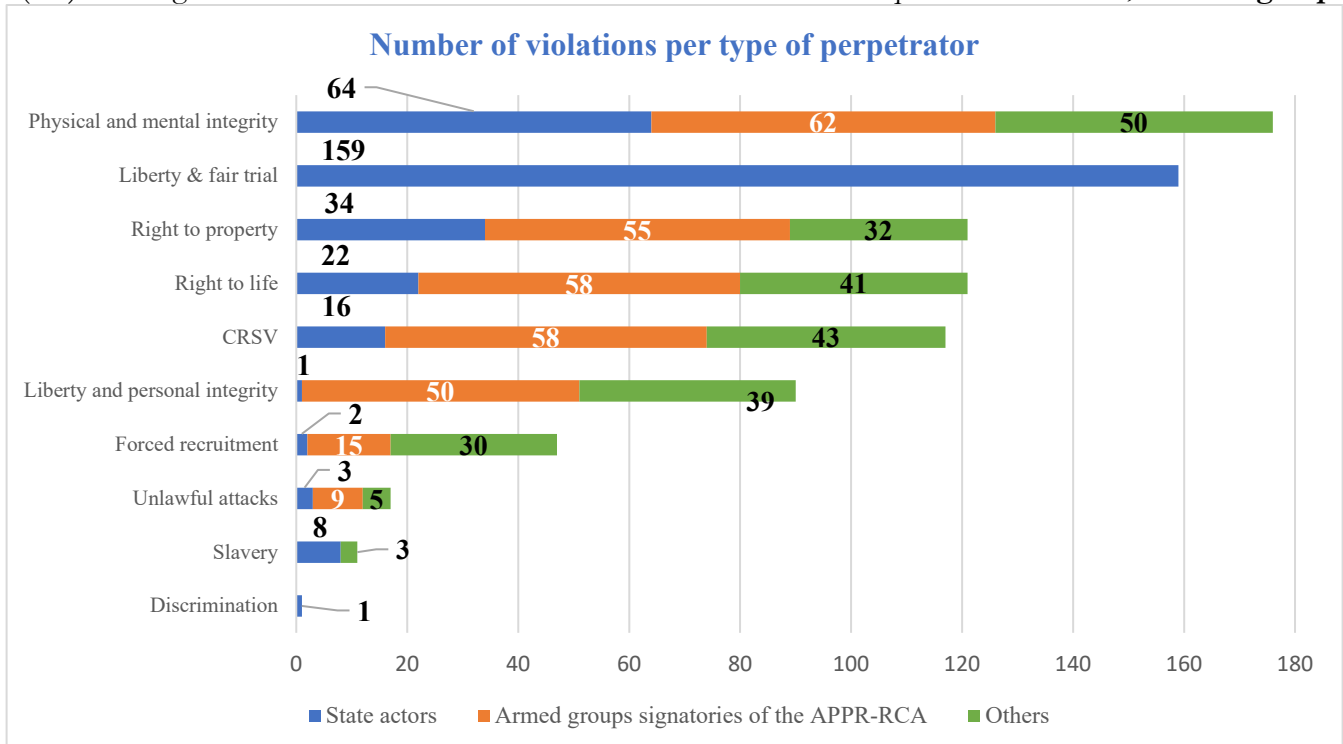
following day, on 17 November, he died in front of the magistrate’s office while he was waiting to be heard by the latter. This incident highlights a major challenge in ensuring the respect of detention standards and addressing a pattern of prolonged detentions in centres/facilities which are often ill-equipped to ensure the respect of these standards. In addition, it highlights the situation of detainees transferred from provinces, away from their families who could provide them with care and assistance.

Most violations documented during the reporting period in the region were attributable to **OSP** (six violations affecting three victims) and **FACA** (five violations affecting three victims). The **OCRB** alone was responsible for 42 victims and the **Gendarmerie** for 16.

PERPETRATORS

During the fourth quarter of 2023, 36% of the documented human rights violations and abuses (310) affecting 516 victims were attributable to **State**

actors, which represent an increase of 7% in terms of violations and 12% in terms of victims compared to the last quarter. Meanwhile, **armed group**



signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for **36%** of the abuses (**307**) affecting **463** victims, representing an increase of **61%** in terms of abuses and **49%** in terms of victims compared to the last quarter.

The HRD also documented **243** human rights abuses committed by **other actors** affecting **225** victims. The sharp increase in abuses and victims when compared with the previous quarter (**91** abuses and **96** victims) is mostly due to the high number of abuses perpetrated by the **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** armed group in the **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture.

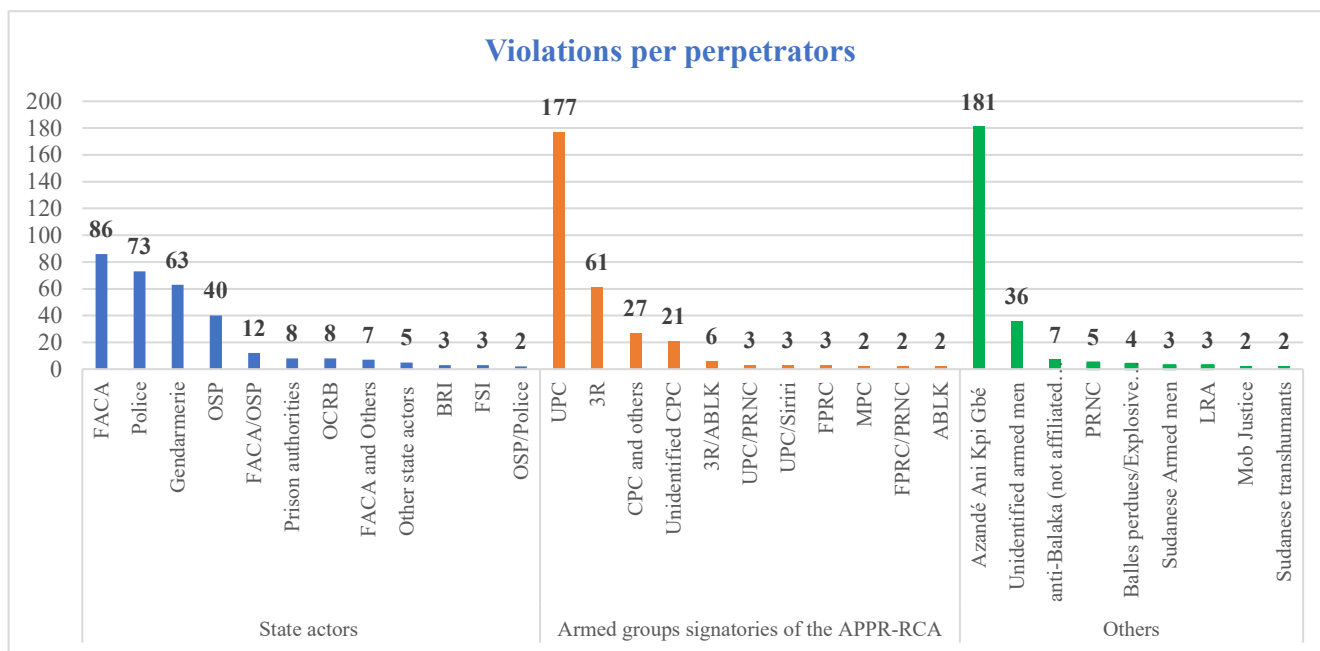
The most common types of abuses committed by **the armed group signatories to the APPR-RCA** were appropriation of property (**55** abuses affecting **116** victims), rape (**50** abuses affecting **79** victims), ill-treatment (**44** abuses affecting **74** victims), killing (**43** abuses affecting **81** victims) and abductions (**35** abuses affecting **116** victims).

Among armed groups, the **UPC** (**177** abuses and **180** victims) and the **3R** (**61** abuses and **90** victims) were the main perpetrators. In addition, unidentified CPC elements committed 21 abuses affecting **29** victims and the **Anti-Balaka** affiliated to **CPC** elements were responsible for 17 abuses affecting 106 victims, mainly children recruited and used in the conflict. The **UPC** armed group was responsible for abuses including killing of **42** persons, rape of **32 girls** and **nine women**, ill-treatment of **46 victims**, destruction or appropriation of property of **70** victims and abduction of **49** others. For example, in October 2023, in Nzacko, **Mbomou** prefecture, UPC elements abducted two girls, respectively 15 and 17 years old from their home and took them to their base where they were raped by UPC commanders. At the time of reporting, the victims were yet to receive medical care. The UPC was also responsible for the recruitment and use

of 20 children in the **Haute-Kotto (Ngoudja and Nzako mining site)**, **Haut Mbomou** (Bambouti and Mboki) and **Mbomou (Nzako)** prefectures. The children are used for various tasks, including cleaning, washing and cooking. Moreover, girls are raped and forced into marriage. In October 2023, in Nzacko, Mbomou prefecture, four UPC and unidentified CPC elements abducted, recruited and used a 16-year-old boy and abused his right to property. The victim was abducted for over a month and forced to cook, wash dishes and clothes while he was deprived of the sum of 150,000 XAF (around 250 USD) and his goods. He succeeded to escape from their control when he was sent to the market.

UPC elements were responsible for **six** cases of unlawful attacks (including denial of humanitarian relief, and attacks against other protected persons) affecting **15** victims. The UPC committed the most abuses in the **Haut-Mbomou** prefecture (**76** violations affecting **81** victims), followed by the **Haute-Kotto** prefecture (**66** violations affecting **63** victims).

Meanwhile, **3R** elements were responsible for the rape of **11** women and **seven** girls, ill-treatment of **19** civilians and destruction of property of **12** others. For example, on 9 December, in Bilakare, (about 75 km from Paoua), **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture, four men armed with weapons and speaking Sango and Arabic, presumably 3R elements, raped a 29-year-old woman while she was in the field collecting beans with her nine-month-old baby. Two of the 3R elements stood guard and watched over the baby while the others slapped, kicked, and threatened the woman if she spoke about the incident. Following this, the woman received medical care. The **3R** armed group was most active in the **Ouham-Pendé** prefecture (**38** violations affecting **59** victims) and the **Mambéré-Kadeï** prefecture (**9** violations



affecting 8 victims). In the Lobaye prefecture, 3R killed, abducted, ill-treated, injured and appropriated the property of 18 civilians.

It is worth noting that the HRD documented four cases of recruitment and use of children affecting 93 victims by **Anti-Balaka affiliated to CPC armed group**. These cases occurred between January 2021 and January 2023 but were documented in October 2023.

Among other actors, the **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** armed group was responsible of 181 abuses affecting 125 victims. Even though most of these abuses occurred outside the reporting period, they were verified and documented during the fourth quarter. The abuses include, among others, abductions (34 affecting 55 victims), ill-treatment (32 affecting 34 victims), recruitment and use of children (25 affecting 53 victims) and killings (23 affecting 38 victims). The **Azande Ani Kpi Gbe** were also responsible for the rape of 14 girls and six women (21 abuses) and the forced marriage of 13 girls and one woman, most of them having been perpetrated concomitantly.

Anti-Balaka elements were responsible of the rape of 10 girls and the recruitment and use of 36

children in the **Mbomou** prefecture. Most of these abuses occurred before the period under review but were verified and documented in October, November and December 2023.

Unidentified armed men were responsible for 36 abuses affecting 33 victims, a decrease compared to the previous quarter (47 violations affecting 61 victims).

The most recurrent violations committed by **State actors** were arbitrary arrest and/or detention and conditions of detention that failed to comply with the national and international standards for the treatment of detainees (159 violations affecting 390 victims), ill-treatment (36 violations affecting 46 victims), appropriation and destruction of property (27 violations affecting 32 victims) and extrajudicial execution (11 violations affecting 11 victims). State actors were also involved in 15 rape cases affecting seven girls and seven women. **FACA** committed the most human rights violations (86 violations affecting 75 victims), mainly ill-treatment (26 violations affecting 35 victims), appropriation and destruction of property (13 violations affecting 14 victims) and the rape of five girls and two women.

Most of the FACA violations happened in the **Nana-Grébizi** prefecture (**14** violations affecting **11** victims). MINUSCA continues to engage with **FACA** hierarchy for remedial action on these cases. The **Police** committed **73** violations affecting **143** victims, followed by the **Gendarmerie** (**63** violations and **170** victims) mostly due to arbitrary arrest and/or detention and conditions of detention that failed to comply with the national and international standards for the treatment of detainees.

OSP, alone, were responsible for **40** violations affecting **50** victims, an increase compared to the previous quarter (15 violations affecting 18 victims). MINUSCA is concerned about the increase in cases of torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions, as well as the appropriation and destruction of civilian property perpetrated by OSP. As an illustration, between 1 and 6 December, seven men were subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture by OSP in Ndassima, Ouaka, and Bangui. On 1 December, the six men left Bangui transporting fuel for the Ndassima mining site with two tanker trucks. In Grimari, two ex-Séléka elements, suspected to be collaborating with OSP, accused them of fuel theft and reported the incident to OSP. Subsequently, OSP interrogated the six men and transported them to Bambari on

2 December. In Bambari, OSP tortured them, tied their arms, taped their mouths, and held them in containers without food or water until 6 December. On 6 December, OSP transferred them in a helicopter to their base behind *Camp de Roux* prison in Bangui, where they continued to subject them to acts of torture. As of 7 December, the men were being held at OCRB and had not appeared before a magistrate.

The HRD continued to document abuses of power by FACA leading to violations of the right to property such as extortion of money, looting of cattle and illegal taxes at security barriers or checkpoints located at village entrances or near main roads. Despite expressed commitment by FACA leadership to address this issue many incidents remain largely unpunished which often tends to undermine the relationship between FACA and the affected communities. The period under review witnessed an increase in cases of appropriation of property and illegal taxation committed by **FACA** (16 violations affecting 17 victims) compared to the previous quarter (11 violations affecting 23 victims). It is worth noting that these abuses are often committed alongside other violations such as ill-treatment, torture, arbitrary arrest, threats to physical or mental integrity and deprivation of liberty.

VICTIMS

Based on the HRD's findings, **1,199** civilians suffered human rights violations and abuses perpetrated by armed groups, State actors and other perpetrators. Of these victims, **335** suffered multiple violations, including **20** groups of collective victims. This is a **39% increase in the number of victims** compared to the previous quarter.

Men continue to represent most victims (**682**), followed by **boys** (**205**), **women** (**109**) and **girls** (**110**) and **four minors** of unknown sex. In addition, there were **89** groups of **collective victims**. Most of these groups were victims of appropriation of property (**45**), inhuman conditions of detention (**23**) and unlawful attacks (**16**).

Men were principally victims of arbitrary arrest and/or detention (333), appropriation of property (140), killing (101) and ill-treatment (93). Boys more subjected to recruitment and use of children (158), abduction (65) and ill-treatment (16). **Women** were mainly victims of rape (46), ill-treatment (28) and killing (21). **Girls** were mainly victims of rape (84), abduction (52) and recruitment and use of children (55).

