



OPENING REMARKS**Press Conference****Wednesday 17 June 2026**

Good morning to everyone. My name is Florence Marchal, and I am the spokesperson for MINUSCA.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this new MINUSCA press conference.

Whether you are here in this room in Bangui or listening to Radio Guira, you are most welcome.

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The only news item I will elaborate on this week is, of course, the meeting of the United Nations Security Council held yesterday in New York and devoted to the situation in the Central African Republic. During that meeting the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic, Valentine Rugwabiza, addressed the Council from Bangui.

This meeting coincides with the Secretary-General's report on the Central African Republic, issued every four months. The report covers the period from 13 February to 13 June 2026.

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In her briefing to the 15 members of the United Nations Security Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic and Head of MINUSCA outlined four main points:

- The progress observed over the past four years, including the holding of the joint elections last December
- The security situation
- The need to rapidly develop a plan to address critical gaps in the security sector
- The ongoing reconfiguration process of MINUSCA

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At the very beginning of her remarks, Valentine Rugwabiza noted with satisfaction that, since her first briefing to the Security Council exactly four years ago, in June 2022, the Central African Republic had made *“remarkable and tangible progress toward lasting peace and security, with the instrumental support of MINUSCA.”*

These achievements were noted in the implementation of political and peace processes, the effective extension of the State’s presence and authority across the entire territory of the Central African Republic, the protection of civilians, as well as the preparation and holding of the historic joint elections of December 2025.

However, the Special Representative cautioned that it is now essential to preserve these gains and ensure their consolidation.

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Reflecting on one of these major achievements – the holding of elections – the Head of MINUSCA indicated that the Central African Republic is moving toward the completion of the 2025/2026 electoral cycle following the second round of the legislative, regional, and municipal elections, as well as by-elections held across the country on 26 April.

She emphasized that *“in a country where elections have too often been associated with tensions and cycles of violence, this is a clear indication of institutional stability.”*

She once again commended the organization of local elections, which have contributed to strengthening inclusive governance. Indeed, women now account for 45% of municipal councilors.

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Addressing the security situation, Valentine Rugwabiza noted improvements across the country in recent years, while pointing out that the situation remains fragile in several border areas in the northeast and southeast. She reassured that MINUSCA would continue its work to protect civilians and consolidate the extension of State authority, in close cooperation with the Government.

Emphasizing the need to sustain the security gains, she advocated for the development of a *“comprehensive and detailed plan to address critical gaps in the capabilities of security sector, a plan based on strong national ownership with the support of international partners,”* adding that this effort is *“critical to ensuring that the mandated gradual transfer of MINUSCA security tasks to the national Defense and Security Forces will not risk strategic reversal of security achievements.”*

According to the Special Representative, future investments in the national security sector and its institutions will focus in particular, on supporting troops deployed in remote areas, the construction and maintenance of Defense and Security Forces bases, training of troops and officers, strengthening operational, logistical, and mobility capacities, as well as improving governance and accountability mechanisms within the security sector.

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The final point addressed by the Special Representative concerned the ongoing reconfiguration of MINUSCA. She cited the example of Mbaki, where the official handover of seven MINUSCA bases to the Central African Government on 10 June *“marked a new milestone in the consolidation of gains and gradual transfer of tasks and responsibilities to national authorities, in support of restoration of State authority and strengthening of national capabilities.”*

The handover of these seven bases is part of a broader MINUSCA plan to consolidate and streamline its operational footprint, in accordance with its political strategy as well as the updated concepts of operations of its Force and Police components, which are geared toward a more agile and mobile posture.

Thus, between January and June 2026, the Mission closed 21 bases, including the seven handed over to the Central African authorities, all of them located in stabilized areas.

MINUSCA also closed three field offices as well as one of its three compounds in Bangui, generating savings and promoting better integration between its civilian and uniformed components.

The Head of MINUSCA cautioned that *“the success of this reconfiguration and MINUSCA’s more mobile concept of operations hinges on enablers particularly aviation capacity, given limited infrastructure and an eight-month rainy season in the Central Africa”*.

On several occasions during her statement, the Special Representative praised the exceptional relationship that exists between the Mission she represents, the Central African authorities, and its people.

She acknowledged that the *“progress we are witnessing today would not have been possible without a close and constant cooperation, built on trust and respect between the Mission and our host country.”*

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Following the Special Representative's briefing, the members of the Security Council took the floor in turn, before giving the floor to the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations.

He echoed the statements of the Head of MINUSCA, stating that his country considers the continued support of MINUSCA to be essential for consolidating the gains achieved in the areas of security, governance, reconciliation, and the implementation of peace agreements, in order to prevent any reversal of the progress made.

Among the other remarks, the representative of France noted that MINUSCA's contribution has been decisive in achieving progress – an accomplishment all the more remarkable given the Mission's unprecedented liquidity constraints.

The representatives of Denmark and Pakistan emphasized MINUSCA's essential and irreplaceable role in providing the necessary protection to civilians.

Ambassador Bartos of the United States praised MINUSCA's ability to design and implement its reconfiguration plans, which could serve as a model for other United Nations missions.

The remarks by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General's report are available online on the Mission's website.

One final update before moving to the Q&A session:

106 combatants have just been disarmed and demobilized in Kouki, in the Ouham prefecture, by the national unit responsible for these

operations, the UEPNDDRR, with the usual logistical, technical, financial, and security support of MINUSCA.

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It is 11: 13 a.m. in Bangui, and we will now move on to the Q&A session.

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I now give the floor to Emmanuel Tokolo for the summary in Sango.

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The time has come to bring this press conference to a close.

Thank you all for your participation.