



Security Council

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The situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council dated 1 November 2024 ([S/PRST/2024/7](#)), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed about the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) every six months. It provides an assessment of the major political and security trends in Central Africa since the report dated 28 November 2025 ([S/2025/772](#)). It also provides an update on the situation in the Lake Chad basin region, pursuant to Council resolution [2349 \(2017\)](#).

II. Major developments in the Central Africa subregion

A. Political, peace and security developments and trends

Political development and trends

2. The reporting period was characterized by a presidential election in the Congo, the postponement of the legislative and municipal elections and the reinstatement of the position of Vice-President in Cameroon, the inauguration of further post-transition institutions in Gabon and the formation of a new Government under a revised constitutional framework in Chad. It was also marked by ongoing legislative reforms and domestic judicial proceedings in several Member States that prompted debates regarding civic space and fundamental freedoms.

3. On 3 March, the five new Commissioners of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), including one woman, were sworn in at an event held in Malabo, hosted by the Chairperson of ECCAS, the President of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo.

4. In Angola, political parties started preparations for the 2027 general elections. On 30 November, the main opposition party National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) re-elected Adalberto Costa Júnior as party president. On 12 March, the ruling party, Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola, announced the holding of its ordinary congress on 9 and 10 December 2026, during which the electoral strategy of the political party will be defined.



5. In Burundi, national authorities initiated preliminary preparations for the presidential election in 2027, while the country continued to grapple with the consequences of a deteriorating security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 11 March, the former Prime Minister of Burundi, Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni, and Colonel Michel Kazungu were granted provisional release on medical grounds; both had been serving life sentences for offences including an attempt to overthrow the Government.

6. In Cameroon, in the aftermath of the disputed presidential election of October 2025, mass protests, “ghost towns” and the arrest and detention of opposition supporters continued for weeks. Regional elections were held on 30 November 2025, enabling the ruling party, Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement, to consolidate its influence across all 10 regions. Civil society and opposition figures criticized these elections, as they were conducted by municipal councillors whose mandates had been extended by one year following the postponement of the municipal and legislative elections that were to have been held in March 2025.

7. On 1 December, the president of the African Movement for New Independence and Democracy opposition party in Cameroon, Anicet Ekane, died in state custody. His death, as well as the detention of other opposition figures, prompted international calls for transparent investigations into the treatment of political detainees and respect for due process. On 23 February, the authorities approved the transfer of Mr. Ekane’s remains from a medical facility morgue in Yaoundé to his family’s custody, after the official autopsy report concluded that he had died of natural causes. Meanwhile, on 17 February, 31 members of the opposition Cameroon Renaissance Movement party, who had been arrested for participating in demonstrations linked to post-electoral grievances, were released.

8. On 23 March, the National Assembly of Cameroon adopted a law extending the mandate of the deputies until 20 December 2026, marking a second prolongation of a term originally set to conclude in March 2025. On 14 April, the President of Cameroon, Paul Biya, promulgated a constitutional amendment reintroducing the position of Vice-President and granting the Head of State the authority to appoint and dismiss the Vice-President. The latter would automatically assume the presidency to complete the remainder of the term in the event of incapacity of the incumbent. The adoption of the bill by Parliament on 4 April was criticized by opposition parties, with the Social Democratic Front boycotting the parliamentary session, and the Cameroon Renaissance Movement calling it a “constitutional coup”. On 4 May, the President signed a decree further extending the mandate of municipal councillors elected in February 2020 until February 2027.

9. Domestic judicial proceedings conducted outside Cameroon against leaders of separatist groups in the North-West and South-West Regions of Cameroon increased. On 9 December 2025, three citizens of the United States of America, of Cameroonian descent, were convicted by a federal trial jury in the United States for providing material support to separatist militias. In Norway, Lucas Cho Ayaba, who had already been arrested on suspicion of incitement to commit crimes against humanity, was charged with war crimes on 9 February. On 3 March, authorities in Belgium arrested four suspected leading figures of the so-called “Ambazonia defence forces” for financing military operations in Cameroon from Belgium.

10. The political space in Chad remained constrained. The conviction of and 20-year sentence handed down to the leading opposition figure and former Transition Prime Minister, Succès Masra, in August 2025, continued to fuel opposition grievances. On 4 February, the Government established a Permanent Framework for Political Dialogue to integrate former politico-military groups into the political process. On 24 April, the Supreme Court ordered the dissolution of the opposition

coalition, Groupe de concertation des acteurs politiques, and declared its activities illegal. The next day, the presidents of eight political parties of the coalition were arrested in N'Djamena on charges of armed assembly, insurrectional movement, rebellion and possession of weapons of war. The coalition had called for a “march of protest and indignation”, scheduled to be held on 2 May, but the Government banned the rally. On 1 May, eight of the detained political leaders signed a communiqué announcing the cancellation of the protest march. Opposition groups and civil society alleged that the security forces had coerced the leaders into issuing the communiqué. On 8 May, the eight leaders were convicted on all charges and sentenced to eight years in prison. Their lawyers maintained that no conclusive evidence had been produced. Meanwhile, on 29 April, hundreds gathered in N'Djamena to mark the eighth anniversary of the establishment of the opposition party Les Transformateurs. Protesters called for the release of Mr. Masra and opposition figures. Following the event, unidentified individuals reportedly opened fire near the party's headquarters, resulting in one death, several injuries and one abduction. On 30 April, the Government described the incident as an altercation between activists and patrol officers, indicating that injuries were caused by “warning shots” fired by security forces, and pledged to investigate the incident.

11. Authorities in Chad focused on further institutionalizing post-transition governance, including by prioritizing the new \$30 billion national development plan, which was launched in Abu Dhabi in November 2025 with the aim of lifting 2.5 million people out of poverty. In his New Year address, the President of Chad, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, emphasized national unity and the transfer of resources to local authorities as part of decentralization efforts. On 1 April, the President appointed a new 37-member Government, led by the Prime Minister, Allah-Maye Halina, and comprising eight new appointees, including from the opposition, and 13 women.

12. In the Congo, on 20 February, the Constitutional Court validated seven candidacies for the presidential election to be held in March, including that of the incumbent President, Denis Sassou Nguesso. The two major parliamentary opposition parties did not field candidates, arguing that conditions were not in place for a free and fair election. The elections took place on 12 March for members of the security forces and 15 March for civilians, in a generally calm environment, amid a nationwide suspension of telephone and Internet networks that started on 15 March, as well as stringent movement restrictions. Electoral observation missions from the African Union and ECCAS were deployed in most parts of the country, while the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) sent an electoral mission. Telephone and Internet services were restored following the announcement of the provisional results on 17 March. On 28 March, the Constitutional Court confirmed the victory of the incumbent, with 94.9 per cent of the vote, followed by Mabio Mavoungou Zinga, candidate of the Alliance party, with 1.4 per cent, and a voter turnout of 84.99 per cent, though the turnout was largely disputed by civil society and opposition parties. The Constitutional Court rejected an appeal for annulment of the provisional results by independent candidate Dave Mafoula, who had come third in the election and had alleged irregularities, including ballot stuffing, vote buying and obstruction of access to party delegates. On 16 April, the President, Mr. Sassou Nguesso, was sworn in for a fifth consecutive mandate.

13. The situation in Equatorial Guinea remained stable, amid a constrained political space. On 2 January, a presidential decree designated Ciudad de la Paz as the new national capital, citing the need to strengthen territorial security, political stability and administrative decentralization, with State institutions expected to relocate within one year.

14. In late December, Gabon concluded its political transition with the inauguration of nearly all State institutions, including the Parliament and Constitutional Court. On 1 January, the President of Gabon, Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, announced a new Government composed of 30 members, including nine women.

15. On 10 December, public secondary school teachers in Gabon launched a countrywide strike, citing inadequate salaries, unpaid or low allowances and persistent administrative blockages. The Government subsequently negotiated an end to the strike. On 17 February, the High Authority for Communication announced the suspension of access to social media platforms, citing the “spread of false information”, “cyberbullying” and the “unauthorized disclosure of personal data”, which could stoke conflict in the country. Access to most social media platforms remains suspended to date. The opposition party Ensemble pour le Gabon, led by the former Prime Minister, Alain-Claude Bilie-By-Nze, filed an emergency motion challenging the measure, which it described as a “grave violation of fundamental freedoms”. The party also argued that the High Authority had overstepped its legal mandate, which did not permit a nationwide shutdown of access to social media. The court of first instance declared itself without jurisdiction to rule on the challenge and referred the matter to the Council of State. On 8 April, the Council of Ministers adopted three ordinances that established rules for social media regarding user identification, content regulation and platform accountability.

16. On 15 April, Mr. Bilie-By-Nze was arrested and remanded in pretrial detention over allegations of fraud and breach of trust linked to a purported unsettled government debt of 5 million CFA francs (approximately \$8,900) owed to a vendor in 2008, when he was president of the national cultural festival under the Ministry of Culture. His party denounced the arrest as arbitrary and politically motivated, calling for respect for the rule of law.

17. In Rwanda, political space remained restricted, marked by tight legal and political constraints on opposition actors. On 27 March, the Supreme Court ruled as unfounded a constitutional petition filed by Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, a prominent opposition figure, against a key provision of the criminal procedure law. Ms. Umuhiza has been in pretrial detention since June 2025 on charges of conspiracy to incite insurrection.

18. On 15 January, the Constitutional Court of Sao Tome and Principe declared unconstitutional, from that moment onwards, the presidential decree of January 2025 dismissing the then-Prime Minister, Patrice Trovoada. Subsequent weeks saw heightened political instability, including the submission and later withdrawal of a motion of censure against the Government of the Prime Minister, Américo Ramos, by the anti-government faction of the Acção Democrática Independente party at the end of January. There were also competing claims to legislative authority after the then Speaker of the National Assembly, Celmira de Almeida do Sacramento dos Santos Lourenço, blocked access to the Parliament building on 2 February, and deputies from the pro-government faction of Acção Democrática Independente and the Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe and Basta political parties, who had gathered at the national university, voted for her removal and the dismissal of the five sitting judges of the Constitutional Court. On 12 February, Abnildo d’Oliveira was elected as Speaker of the National Assembly. On 26 February, five newly elected judges of the Constitutional Court, including two women, were sworn in. On 5 March, the National Assembly voted for the temporary suspension of the Military Justice Act to allow the trial related to the alleged coup d’état of 25 November 2022 to proceed in a civil court instead of a military court. Meanwhile, the newly constituted National Electoral Commission initiated preparations for presidential and legislative elections to be held in July and September 2026, respectively.

Women and peace and security

19. During the reporting period, the national action plan of the Central African Republic for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was validated by the authorities; initiatives to develop national action plans were undertaken by Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe. On 29 November, Gabon officially established the national coordination structure for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Security development and trends

20. Violence persisted in the North-West and South-West Regions of Cameroon. Separatist groups used improvised explosive devices against military patrols and enforced lockdowns to disrupt the academic year and the electoral process. Military operations in response resulted in the neutralization of several separatist cells, including the killing of 11 fighters in Bui, North-West Region, on 8 January. Between December and February, recurrent raids by separatist fighters in the North-West Region around Wowo and Gidado and the systematic destruction of Mbat village, resulted in at least 38 civilian fatalities, including Mbororo herders, women and children, while displacing approximately 850 residents following the widespread burning and looting of hundreds of homes and farms. On 26 April, at least 14 people, including three women, were reportedly killed during an operation by security and defence forces at a cultural festival in Ndzerem-Nyam, North-West Region. According to the national authorities, security forces responded after coming under fire from armed individuals, resulting in the killing of fighters from various factions. The operation reportedly also led to the recovery of weapons and improvised explosive devices, and the arrest of two individuals, including a 16-year-old boy. Civil society organizations and religious leaders disputed the official narrative.

21. Chad continued to face acute security pressures along its eastern border as a direct consequence of the conflict in the Sudan. Repeated incursions by Sudanese belligerents, including drone strikes on Chadian military positions, culminated in an aerial strike launched from Sudanese territory that killed around 20 civilians in Tiné on 18 March. These developments prompted the Government of Chad to close the border with the Sudan from 23 February, allowing only authorized humanitarian operations. Chad also placed national defence forces on maximum alert and authorized military retaliation, including the right of pursuit into the Sudan. Following the attack, a high-level Government delegation had travelled to eastern Chad to enforce strict directives to disarm or neutralize any armed Sudanese elements crossing the 1,300 km border. The influx of Sudanese refugees has placed a severe strain on national resources and social cohesion in the eastern provinces. Following the border closure, new refugee arrivals fell from 7,464 in February and 5,050 in January to 1,925 in March. On 23 March, the President of Chad ordered the emergency relocation of Sudanese refugees away from the border in order to facilitate military deployments and the construction of defensive barriers.

22. Intercommunal violence in Chad over land and water access continued to lead to significant fatalities, particularly during the rainy season, with recurrent clashes between herders and farmers in the south exacerbated by climate-related pressure on grazing routes and natural resources. From 9 to 12 January, fighting between the national army and rebel coalitions in southern Chad resulted in at least 22 deaths. In the north, on 11 January, authorities established a new joint military surveillance unit with the Libyan National Army to secure the border against organized criminal networks, trafficking groups and armed actors. In the east, on 26 April, intercommunal violence in Wadi Fira Province resulted in at least 42 deaths and 10

injured, according to government sources. The army was deployed and authorities stated that the situation had been brought under control.

23. On 19 February, the Central African Republic and Chad established two new operational sectors for their joint border security force. The commander of the joint force oversaw the deployment of units to enhance the protection of local populations and facilitate the secure movement of traders and goods. On 4 and 5 April, the two countries conducted a joint security operation along their shared border.

24. The run-up to the elections in the Congo saw exchanges of fire between security forces and former Ninja militias in the Pool Department, in the context of security operations targeting delinquent youth groups and criminality. These incidents, which were the most serious since the signing of the 2017 peace agreement, reportedly led to casualties and material damage. Security operations ceased at the end of January.

Boko Haram/Lake Chad basin crisis

25. In the Far North Region of Cameroon, on the night of 22 to 23 December, armed militants attacked Ngouma, killing one soldier and abducting at least four civilians. On 15 February, suspected Boko Haram fighters targeted several communities in Blangoua, resulting in two deaths and the abduction of 19 persons, including women and children. Between January and March, a series of coordinated assaults by Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups across the Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Sava and Logone-et-Chari axes resulted in the deaths of civilians and widespread displacement. On 4 April, two gendarmes and one civilian were killed during a night-time incursion attributed to Boko Haram militants in Assigashia, Mayo-Moskota district.

26. Armed attacks in the Lac Province of Chad continued. On 2 March, at the Fitné outpost, Chadian forces repelled Boko Haram-affiliated attackers, killing eight assailants while suffering one fatality and two injuries. On 31 March, seven Chadian nationals were abducted by a Boko Haram faction, leaving one person dead and six hostages taken towards the Niger–Chad border. On 4 May, Boko Haram fighters attacked a Chadian military installation on the island of Barka Tolorom, with reports indicating between 23 and 25 soldiers killed and 26 to 46 others injured. The Government declared a state of emergency in Lac Province from 7 to 27 May. Since 8 May, Chadian forces have also reportedly carried out air strikes against armed groups, resulting in reports of dozens of fishermen being killed and raising serious protection concerns. In a media statement issued on 13 May, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called for military operations to be conducted in full compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. On 15 May, the Government of Chad categorically rejected the allegations, while expressing its readiness to conduct transparent investigations through its national institutions.

27. On 2 and 3 April, the President of Chad visited Abuja, where he and the President of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, pledged strengthened security cooperation and joint action against terrorism and reiterated their commitment to the Multinational Joint Task Force.

Lord's Resistance Army

28. At the end of 2025 and the beginning of 2026, on three separate occasions, some 30 civilians abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), predominantly women and children, escaped captivity. They provided information to local authorities and security forces in Sam Ouandja, Haute-Kotto Prefecture in the Central African Republic, which enabled security operations to disrupt LRA activities in the area. On 4 and 5 April, reports from the international non-governmental organization Invisible

Children indicated that elements of LRA had attacked communities near the border between the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, abducting 21 children and young persons (9 men and 12 women). On 9 April, an attack in Bangu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulted in four abductions. Local youth resisted, injuring one attacker and enabling three captives to escape.

Maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

29. While the overall frequency of maritime incidents in the Gulf of Guinea has trended downwards in recent years, a series of high-profile kidnappings underscored a continued security challenge. On 3 December, a liquefied petroleum gas carrier under a Portuguese flag heading to Malabo was hijacked approximately 50 nautical miles off the coast of Equatorial Guinea. Nine crew members were abducted and one was wounded; their release was later confirmed by their company on 29 December. On the night of 10 to 11 January, armed assailants attacked a Gabonese-flagged fishing vessel in Gabonese territorial waters, abducting nine crew members, including five Chinese and four Indonesian nationals.

Effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters on regional stability, including farmer-herder dynamics in Central Africa

30. Between December and March, Central Africa experienced above-average temperatures and uneven rainfall, increasing environmental pressures across the subregion. According to the Climate Application and Forecasting Centre of Central Africa, rainfall remained normal to above normal in equatorial areas in the Congo, parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, but below normal in several inland areas, increasing pressure on water and pasture resources and affecting rural livelihoods dependent on rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism.

31. According to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, farmer-herder and intercommunal clashes between 1 December and 15 March resulted in at least 21 fatalities across the subregion. In January, violence between herders and farmers following crop damage caused by livestock in Logone-et-Chari, Far North Region of Cameroon, left nine people dead. In February, clashes linked to disputes over grazing access in Moyon-Chari Province of Chad resulted in 12 fatalities.

B. Humanitarian developments

32. The humanitarian context in Central Africa remained highly fragile. Protracted conflicts, violence and insecurity, chronic food insecurity, limited development gains, inadequate infrastructure and climate shocks continued to exacerbate needs. Worsening security dynamics increased the number of people requiring assistance and further drove population displacement, while access constraints hampered humanitarian operations. Unprecedented funding shortfalls further constrained humanitarian response efforts.

33. In Angola, national authorities and their national and international partners were responding to an ongoing cholera outbreak. As at 9 May, the Government had reported 39,428 cumulative cases and 957 deaths since January 2025, with transmission reported in 18 of 21 provinces. In April, severe rainfall caused flash flooding in Luanda, Benguela and other provinces, resulting in at least 19 confirmed deaths and 31 people missing, displacement and damage to homes and public infrastructure. More than 51,000 people were affected.

34. Burundi continued to face a complex humanitarian situation. Floods, landslides and erratic rainfall contributed to the loss of livelihoods, displacement, worsening food insecurity and acute malnutrition. The continued fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo forced thousands of Congolese to flee to Burundi. As at 30 April, Burundi was hosting some 113,300 refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as 89,000 internally displaced persons. Some 62,640 Burundian refugees have returned from the United Republic of Tanzania since January, amid insufficient access to basic services in the main return areas and overstretched response capacities. Outbreaks, particularly of cholera, continued to strain an already fragile health system.

35. In Cameroon, 2.9 million people were projected to need humanitarian assistance in 2026, including 1.2 million people in the North-West and South-West Regions, which hosted an estimated 493,400 internally displaced persons as at 30 April. Cameroon also hosted some 411,290 refugees and 20,500 asylum seekers as at 30 April. In 2026, humanitarian partners aimed to assist 1.9 million people, including 1.1 million with acute needs who were hyperprioritized, with total requirements of \$319 million. As at 13 May, \$72.7 million, or 22.8 per cent of the requirements, had been received.

36. Chad was facing the most acute humanitarian crisis in the subregion, with 4.6 million people, or 22 per cent of the population, requiring urgent assistance. The war in the Sudan remained the dominant driver, with a total of almost 1.36 million refugees in Chad, straining already fragile host communities. As at 10 May, more than 927,000 people had crossed the border from the Sudan to Chad in search of safety since the onset of the fighting in 2023, 86 per cent of whom were women and children. In 2026, humanitarian actors were seeking \$986 million to support 3.4 million people out of 4.5 million in need of assistance. As at 12 May, \$240 million, or nearly 24.3 per cent of the requirements, had been received. Total requirements from the Chad chapter of the 2026 Sudan regional refugee response plan amount to \$567.7 million, which is currently funded at approximately 10 per cent.

37. In the Congo, an outbreak of cholera declared in July 2025 resulted in 76 confirmed and 998 suspected cases, with 91 deaths reported.

Lake Chad basin crisis

38. In the Far North Region of Cameroon, 1.3 million people were projected to need humanitarian assistance in 2026. The region hosted some 510,850 internally displaced persons and over 125,190 Nigerian refugees as at 30 April. Around 20 per cent of the region's population was expected to face severe acute food insecurity in the lean season, from June to August.

39. In the Lac Province of Chad, ongoing violence by armed groups left more than 219,595 people internally displaced as at 30 April and exposed civilians, especially women who head most of the displaced households, to serious protection risks. The province hosted some 22,025 refugees as at 30 April.

C. Human rights trends

40. In Angola, the legislature adopted several bills, including the Law on the Statute of Non-Governmental Organizations, which entered into force on 2 March, and a new digital regulatory package, including proposed legislation on cybersecurity and combating false information online, which passed the first stage of approval in January. While the Government argued that these measures aimed to align with international standards, political actors and civil society organizations expressed concern about their potential implications on civic space and the exercise of

fundamental freedoms, particularly the freedom of association and expression. UNITA subsequently filed a request for a review of the Law on the Statute of Non-Governmental Organizations by the Constitutional Court.

41. In Burundi, the release of journalists Sandra Muhoza and Kenny Claude Nduwimana on 4 March, following a letter dated 27 February from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights addressed to the President, Evariste Ndayishimiye, marked a limited but encouraging development for media freedom. Ms. Muhoza was released on parole. She had been sentenced in December 2024 to 21 months in prison following a conviction for “undermining the integrity of the national territory”. Mr. Nduwimana was released after being granted a presidential pardon, following his conviction in August 2024, including for outrage against a public official and undermining State security, and had been sentenced to eight months in prison and to pay damages.

42. In Cameroon, on 15 January, the Military Court in Yaoundé convicted three members of the defence forces and one militia member for offences linked to the killing of civilians, including children, and arson in the village of Ngarbuh, North-West Region, on 14 February 2020, imposing custodial sentences on 19 February, ranging from 5 to 10 years. Representatives of victims raised concerns regarding the proportionality of sentences and procedural obstacles that limited effective victim participation. On 25 February, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), while noting that it was encouraging that the sentences had been pronounced, regretted that no senior officers were tried, adding that all those responsible, including those with command responsibility, must be held to account.

43. During the reporting period, 17 third-country nationals, including asylum-seekers and one stateless person, were reportedly deported from the United States of America to Cameroon and detained upon arrival. Concerns were raised regarding the legal basis for their detention in Cameroon and the risk of onward transfer to another country where their human rights could be violated. In Equatorial Guinea, third-country nationals were also reportedly transferred from the United States of America pursuant to a bilateral arrangement.

44. In Cameroon, on 17 February, four journalists and a lawyer were reportedly assaulted and detained and their equipment confiscated by security forces as they attempted to interview deportees at a detention facility in Yaoundé. They were released the same day.

45. In the Congo, security operations that were initiated in 2025 against urban gangs intensified. The operations were conducted with the stated objective of restoring public order, particularly in Brazzaville and other major cities, and reportedly responded to widespread public concerns about insecurity. OHCHR received reports of allegations of extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests and detention during the conduct of the operations. While authorities indicated their intention to complement security measures with reintegration initiatives, the response remained predominantly security driven, which raised concerns about compliance with the State’s constitutional and international human rights obligations.

46. In Gabon, on 25 March, authorities adopted an ordinance on reforming the nationality framework, establishing revised criteria and procedures governing the acquisition and deprivation of nationality. The reform raised human rights concerns, notably regarding the introduction of “Indigenous ancestry” as a criterion for nationality by origin, limitations on acquisition of nationality through marriage, expanded executive discretion in naturalization matters and differential access to public office, which may increase the risks of discrimination and loss of nationality.

Authorities expressed a commitment to ensure that the measures would be implemented through a rigorous and transparent judicial process.

47. In January, the Human Rights Council conducted the universal periodic review of Rwanda. Member States acknowledged progress while recommending further measures, including the ratification of outstanding human rights treaties, protection of civic space, strengthening of the National Commission for Human Rights, accountability for serious violations and the advancement of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly for vulnerable groups.

D. Socioeconomic trends

48. On 22 January, the Heads of State of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) convened an extraordinary summit in Brazzaville to address the erosion of foreign exchange reserves. The leaders renewed their commitment to fiscal consolidation and the enforcement of foreign exchange regulations, including the mandatory repatriation of extractive sector export revenues to the regional banking system, in order to strengthen the reserve position of the Bank of Central African States.

49. Debt servicing pressures persisted, with interest payments consuming between 12 and 20 per cent of government revenues across the subregion. On 27 January, Cameroon issued a \$750 million Eurobond, which was significantly oversubscribed, enabling the authorities to clear outstanding payment arrears and secure financing for the 2026 State budget.

50. Fiscal consolidation measures increasingly shaped State budgets. Cameroon adopted a tighter budget for 2026 with targeted expenditure cuts to narrow the deficit, while in Chad, the 2026 budget was aimed at increasing non-oil revenues and containing the wage bill. The tightening of government spending, including social spending, occurred against a backdrop of inflationary pressures linked to the Middle East crisis and growing social protection needs. On 6 February, Sao Tome and Principe approved its 2026 budget, including expenditure cuts of approximately \$37.1 million, amid declining external assistance following its graduation from the category of least developed countries in December 2024, while the country was going through an energy crisis due to significant arrears to its supplier.

51. Decreased spending on the social sector resulted in heightened social grievances. Similar to Gabon, teachers went on strike in Chad between January and February, where authorities withheld February salaries for striking teachers. Fiscal constraints also affected regional institutions. On 5 February, the President of the CEMAC Commission announced the suspension of non-essential activities due to a severe cash-flow crisis stemming from a funding gap in the amount of 263.5 billion CFA francs (approximately \$465.9 million).

III. Activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

A. Good offices, preventive diplomacy and mediation

Angola

52. Between 21 and 24 January, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa visited Luanda, meeting with the President, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, and other senior officials. He highlighted the important stabilizing

mediation role played by Angola, particularly regarding the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and discussed the importance of consolidating institutional stability and adopting inclusive approaches as the country prepares for the 2027 elections.

Chad

53. From 25 to 28 January, the Special Representative visited N'Djamena, where he met with senior officials. Discussions centred on developments in Chad following the conclusion of the political transition, prospects for strengthening stability amid continued security challenges and opportunities for enhancing cooperation.

Congo

54. From 19 to 26 December, the Special Representative visited Brazzaville, where he met senior officials, opposition actors, civil society figures and representatives of the international community. He stressed the importance of maintaining an open and peaceful political space ahead of the presidential election.

B. Enhancing subregional capacities for conflict prevention and mediation

Collaboration with regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations, including support provided to the Economic Community of Central African States

55. On 28 November, the Special Representative for Central Africa and the President of the ECCAS Commission adopted an interim road map outlining priority areas of cooperation. On 3 February, they reviewed progress made in line with the road map, including the implementation of the strategy on the climate, peace and security agenda and support provided by UNOCA to update the regional action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

Partnerships with civil society and support to civil society networks

56. On 4 December, UNOCA, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Mano River Union convened a virtual regional dialogue on women-led peacebuilding. Key priorities identified included systematic data collection on violence against women, harmonized legal frameworks and increased investment in early warning mechanisms and economic empowerment.

57. On 13 December, UNOCA co-organized a virtual commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#) on youth and peace, and security. Approximately 50 participants from States members of ECCAS reviewed progress and shared recommendations from the first African youth consultation on mediation and preventive diplomacy, held in Kigali from 30 September to 2 October 2025.

58. On 27 February, UNOCA and ECCAS launched the first “Youth, peace and security café”, focused on education, with 58 participants, including 17 women. The online event was aimed at facilitating exchanges of good practices in the implementation of the youth and peace and security agenda in the subregion and identifying the concerns and strategic needs of youth civil society organizations.

C. Support to the United Nations, regional and subregional initiatives on peace and security

Lake Chad basin crisis

59. From 12 to 15 February, UNOCA participated in the technical validation workshop for the territorial action plans and the results framework of the Regional Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience Strategy for Areas Affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin Region, convened by the Lake Chad Basin Commission in Abuja. On 27 March, UNOCA participated in the seventh meeting of the steering committee of the Strategy, held in N'Djamena. Participants approved key operational documents and recommendations to address the escalating security crisis in the Lake Chad basin.

Maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

60. On 22 January, the Special Representative met with the leadership of the Gulf of Guinea Commission in Luanda to discuss challenges to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. He reaffirmed UNOCA commitment to supporting the implementation of the declaration on advancing regional cooperation and transparent governance for a sustainable blue economy in the Gulf of Guinea, adopted at the International Conference on the Blue Economy in the Gulf of Guinea, held in July 2025 in Yaoundé.

Climate, peace and security

61. On 6 February, during a working session, UNOCA, in partnership with ECCAS, other regional partners and United Nations system entities, launched its climate, peace and security strategy, establishing a regional framework for integrating climate-related risks into peace and security efforts in Central Africa. It sets out strategic priority actions, including early warning; capacity-building; mainstreaming climate, peace and security into diplomacy, mediation and peacebuilding; regional cooperation; community resilience; and climate finance mobilization.

62. On 21 February, the Special Representative, the President of the ECCAS Commission and the Executive Director of NORCAP signed a tripartite strategic partnership framework agreement aimed at enhancing early warning, strengthening crisis response, mobilizing resources and supporting more integrated solutions to climate security and development challenges in Central Africa.

63. On 9 March, UNOCA completed a study on climate, peace and security in eastern Chad. Drawing on fieldwork conducted between 29 September and 10 October 2025, the study concluded that interlinking environmental degradation, displacement dynamics and institutional and governance challenges demonstrates how climate change acts as a conflict amplifier, intensifying competition over natural resources. It highlighted the importance of conflict-sensitive climate adaptation and strengthening local resilience.

Transhumance and farmer-herder conflicts

64. UNOCA provided technical support to the ECCAS Commission in finalizing the draft regional protocol on peaceful pastoralism and cross-border transhumance in Central Africa, which will need to be validated by States members of ECCAS. On 12 December, UNOCA met with the Coalition of Women Mediators for Sustainable Peace in N'Djamena to discuss climate, peace and security priorities in eastern Chad. Participants agreed to strengthen women's participation in early warning systems and support capacity-building on climate-sensitive mediation.

D. Enhancing United Nations coherence and coordination in the subregion

Internal United Nations exchanges, collaboration, coordination and joint initiatives

65. On 28 April, UNOCA and UNOWAS held an online desk-to-desk meeting to review political and security trends in Central and West Africa, emphasizing the need for joint engagement on the crisis in the Lake Chad basin, maritime security, climate security, human rights, youth and peace and security and women and peace and security.

Partnerships with and support to resident coordinators and country teams

66. From 8 to 18 March, UNOCA deployed a Political Affairs Officer and a Public Information Officer to the Resident Coordinator Office in Brazzaville to enhance monitoring and reporting in connection with the presidential election in the Congo.

67. From 3 to 8 May, UNOCA deployed a Political Affairs Officer to the Resident Coordinator Office in Sao Tome and Principe to enhance monitoring and reporting ahead of the presidential election.

IV. Observations and recommendations

68. I am increasingly concerned by trends featuring restrictions on civil and political rights in parts of Central Africa, including more restrictive regulatory requirements for civil society organizations, disruptions of access to social media and other digital platforms and arrests and detentions of opposition members and other political actors. Taken together, these developments affect freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and access to information, and could contribute to a narrowing of civic space.

69. States have an important responsibility to address disinformation, incitement and hate speech, and to protect public order and the rights of others. Any restrictions on freedom of expression must be provided by law, pursue a specified legitimate aim and be necessary and proportionate to that aim. States must also comply with their obligations of non-discrimination and must ensure access to effective remedies in relation to any alleged violations. In this context, I encourage Governments in the subregion to expedite the formal endorsement of the ECCAS regional strategy and action plan to combat hate speech. I also encourage sustained progress on the endorsement and implementation of complementary regional frameworks, including a protocol on governance and elections, to strengthen democratic governance while safeguarding fundamental freedoms.

70. In Cameroon, the level of political tension has decreased following the immediate post-electoral period, yet political, social and security concerns persist and demand sustained attention. I encourage Cameroonian authorities to promote renewed national unity and a collective commitment to peace, drawing on the country's rich diversity. This is particularly crucial considering the continuing armed violence in the North-West, South-West and Far North Regions. Sustaining stability is also vital for tackling cross-border challenges such as violent extremism, transnational crime and irregular migration, while also safeguarding economic corridors, facilitating humanitarian operations and enhancing regional cooperation. The United Nations remains committed to supporting inclusive, nationally led initiatives designed to foster lasting peace, strengthen social cohesion and secure enduring stability, in collaboration with national authorities and civil society, as well as regional, international and multilateral partners.

71. Chad remains a linchpin of stability in the wider region, but the war in the Sudan poses a serious threat to social cohesion and stability. I call upon international and regional partners of the Sudan to increase efforts to support de-escalation and conflict resolution for the Sudan and urge all relevant external actors to refrain from actions that could further fuel the conflict in the Sudan. I encourage more political efforts to address the growing regionalization of the conflict in the Sudan. I appeal to international and multilateral partners of Chad to increase the funding of the humanitarian response plan for Chad and support the country's long-term stabilization and development efforts. Continued international support is equally required for the regional refugee response plan for the Sudan Situation, including its Chad chapter. Sustained attention to the protection of civic and political space and respect for fundamental freedoms, including freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and respect for the rule of law and due process, will be critical to preserving social cohesion and ensuring that these efforts are inclusive and sustainable.

72. The conclusion of the political transition in Gabon was an important milestone. Looking ahead, it will be essential to maintain an open political space, respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms and sustain dialogue with all political forces. The population's socioeconomic expectations will remain high in the post-transition period, as reflected in recent strikes by teachers and concerns over restrictions on access to social media. I encourage authorities to continue to prioritize the needs of the population and ensure that ongoing reforms translate into tangible improvements in the daily lives of the people.

73. I note the holding of peaceful presidential elections in the Congo. The grievances expressed by the opposition regarding electoral governance, however, highlight the importance of broadening political dialogue to all stakeholders, particularly ahead of the 2027 legislative and local elections. Sustaining peace and stability will require the engagement of all, and I encourage youth and women to actively participate in this endeavour. I note with concern reports of human rights violations in conjunction with operations by the security forces against youth gangs, as well as reports of renewed violent confrontations between security forces and former Ninja rebels in the Pool Department. I call upon the Congolese authorities to ensure that interventions that aim to guarantee the security of citizens also safeguard fundamental human rights. The United Nations stands ready to share lessons learned from multi-pronged strategies, combining political, socioeconomic and security policies to address youth criminality in other country contexts, and to provide related technical assistance. I further call upon partners to support the long envisaged disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme for the Pool Department, with a view to ending the risk of recurrent violence in the area.

74. While valuing the open political space in Sao Tome and Principe, I note that the pre-electoral context risks diverting attention from essential reforms, particularly in the justice and security sectors, and undermining trust in State institutions. I welcome the introduction of automatic voter registration as a significant step towards the strengthening of the electoral process and encourage the continued implementation of the national conflict prevention strategy in line with the commitments of the Pact for the Future. I hope that the transfer of the trial of the events of 25 November 2022 from a military to a civilian court will help to ensure that long-standing calls for transparency and accountability are answered in full compliance with national law and international standards, thereby minimizing risks of political instrumentalization.

75. I remain deeply concerned by the burden that debt servicing places on national budgets in Central Africa at the expense of development and basic services. This is particularly worrisome at a time of declining external assistance and rising inflationary pressure exacerbated by the conflict in the Middle East and increasing

demand for stronger social safety nets. I reiterate my earlier calls for reform of the international financial architecture and to ensure, among other things, the greater availability of affordable, long-term development finance for developing countries as well as a sovereign debt framework that more effectively support sustainable development.

76. The Lake Chad Basin Commission and its Multinational Joint Task Force are unique cross-regional initiatives that bring a multidimensional response to the scourge of terrorism and support sustainable development for communities living in isolated border areas. I am encouraged by the renewed commitment of Chad and Nigeria to the Task Force and the continued support of international partners for the Force. As the tactics of violent extremist groups become increasingly sophisticated, enhanced technical assistance will be required. The renewed attacks underscore the continued capacity of extremist groups to stage opportunistic strikes and reinforce the need for sustained regional cooperation through mechanisms such as the Task Force. I call upon regional and multilateral development banks to partner with the Commission and fund the cross-border programmes envisioned by its updated regional strategy.

77. I remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Central Africa due to the combined effects of conflict, food insecurity, recurrent disease outbreaks and climate insecurity. The decrease in international funding has forced humanitarian actors into hyperprioritization, which entails fewer people in need receiving humanitarian assistance and worsening protection and mortality risks in the most underserved areas. I again call for renewed international solidarity in the face of unspeakable human suffering. I encourage countries accepting third-country nationals pursuant to bilateral arrangements to engage with the United Nations system to ensure full respect for the rights of the individuals concerned, in line with international law.

78. I express my appreciation to the Governments of the subregion, the African Union, ECCAS, CEMAC, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and other regional and subregional institutions for their continued collaboration with UNOCA. I remain grateful to Gabon for its hospitality towards and support for UNOCA.

79. Lastly, I would like to thank my former Special Representative, Abdou Abarry, for his efforts related to peace and security priorities in Central Africa during his mandate, which has ended. I would also like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative to the African Union, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, for his strategic engagement in Central Africa during a leadership transition in UNOCA. I would also like to thank the staff of UNOCA for their continuing commitment to and support for regional efforts to advance the cause of peace and security in Central Africa.