

SECURITY COUNCIL

Reports of the Secretary-General

The reports of the Secretary-General (S/1998/61, January 1998; S/1998/148 and S/1998/148/Add.1, February 1998; S/1998/540, June 1998; S/1998/783, August 1998) reflect conditions prior to and after the establishment of a UN presence in the country.

The reports in the first part of the year review the political, military, security, economic and social conditions in the Central African Republic (CAR), as well as progress made in implementing the Bangui Agreements of January 1997. The reports set out the reasoning on the basis of which the Security Council could consider the possibility of establishing a UN mission to stabilize the overall political and security situation in the country. The main goals and tasks of such a UN mission of limited duration were seen as: consolidating the process of national reconciliation for the full implementation of the Bangui Agreements; helping to create the necessary conditions for the holding of free and fair legislative elections scheduled for August/September 1998; providing advice and facilitating technical assistance in the areas of good governance and promotion of human rights; assisting in the maintenance of a secure environment, law and order and the protection of key installations in Bangui; advising on the restructuring of the security forces and monitoring their neutrality before and during the elections; and observing the elections and verifying their results. It was proposed that two human rights experts be attached to the Mission, as requested by the government, to advise the national authorities and organizations on human rights issues and to identify technical assistance needs for capacity-building in this area. By resolution 1159 of 27 March 1998, the Security Council decided to establish the UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA).

The reports issued after the establishment of MINURCA refer to, *inter alia*: the National Reconciliation Pact which bans the use of force as an instrument of achieving political power; adoption of a Press Code by the National Assembly and the establishment of a commission to oversee freedom of the press (Haut Conseil de la communication); continuing divisions and distrust, including along ethnic and regional lines, in Central African society; adoption of an Electoral Code by the National Assembly, which provided for the creation of an independent and mixed electoral commission (Commission electorale mixte et independante); continuing reports of banditry and other serious criminal acts in the interior of the country; the steps taken to dissolve the security services and downsize and restructure the Presidential Guard; the creation of the Special Force for the Defence of Republican Institutions and the Directorate-General for State Documentation; failure to take steps to create a national, republican and multi-ethnic army, whose size and activities would be in line with national budgetary capacity; plans related to the demobilization of some 1,000 military personnel; training programmes for trainers of the National Police; and the need for transparent and accountable handling of the state's economy and mea-

asures to improve the economic and social conditions in the country generally.

Resolutions of the Security Council

In the resolutions adopted (S/RES/1152, February 1998; S/RES/1155, March 1998; S/RES/1159, March 1998; S/RES/1182, July 1998; S/RES/1201, October 1998) the Council, *inter alia*: expressed appreciation for the work of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB); called upon the parties to complete without delay to complete the implementation of the provisions of the Bangui Agreements; welcomed the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Representative to the CAR; stressed the need for the authorities to take concrete steps to implement political, economic, social and security reforms, including the establishment of an electoral code and preparations for legislative elections; established a United Nations Mission in the CAR (MINURCA) to begin 15 April 1998, with its mandate extended as required; defined the mandate along the lines proposed by the Secretary-General (see above); welcomed the inauguration of the Electoral Commission with a neutral and independent Chairman; called on the government to adopt, as soon as possible, a plan for the effective restructuring of the armed forces; and, welcomed the adoption of an operational plan for the organization of the legislative elections and the decision to hold those elections on 22 November and 13 December 1998.

In resolution 1201/1998, the Security Council extended the mandate of MINURCA to 28 February 1999.

FIELD OPERATIONS

The headquarters for the UN Assistance Mission to the Central African Republic (MINURCA) is in Bangui. The Human Rights Section is headed by Bertrand Fassu Njanja, Human Rights Adviser, Acting Head, Mission d'Assistance des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine (Section des Droits de l'Homme), B. P. 2732, Bangui, République Centrafricaine; Phone: (236) 61-20-43, ext. 6212; Fax: (1-212) 963-9715; e-mail: fassu@un.org.

Security Council resolution 11/59 of 27 March 1998 established MINURCA as a follow up to the previous OAU Monitoring Mission. In view of the situation in the Central African Republic, it appeared appropriate to incorporate a human rights dimension in UN efforts and strategies towards reconciliation and peace, as implemented through MINURCA which is administered by Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO). Under an agreement between DPKO and OHCHR, the OHCHR is responsible for identifying the two human rights advisors who will staff the Human Rights Unit and provide substantive guidance to MINURCA and DPKO.

The functions of the Human Rights Unit mainly consist in providing assistance to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights. This includes monitoring of the human rights situation in the mission