

Central African Republic Civil War (CPC Phase): Conflict Stakeholder, Mobilization & Network Analysis

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Introduction & Report Overview

In December 2020, eight years into the Central African Republic's (CAR) civil war and roughly a week before the latest presidential election, six of the country's rebel groups—who at the time controlled two-thirds of national territory—formed Coalition des patriotes pour le changement (CPC).^{1 2} Though opportunistic alliances among previously-warring factions were not a new phenomenon, the rapid territorial gains which reached the outskirts of the capital, Bangui, gave credence to its legitimacy, despite the lack of centralization among its constituent members.^{3 4} This report will primarily focus on the time period December 2020 to May 2021, at which point the CPC had lost much of its territorial gains.⁵

Drawing from the USAID Conflict Assessment Framework (Version 2.0), this report employs both a stakeholder and mobilization political economy analysis (PEA) and a political network analysis (PNA).⁶ The PEA investigates eleven key individuals involved in the conflict: President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, Héritier Doneng, Yevgeny Prigozhin, President Vladimir Putin, François Bozizé, Nourredine Adam, Ali Darassa, Mahamat al-Khatim, Sidiki Abass, Maxime Mokom, and Dieudonné Ndomate. Through the PEA, this report seeks to demonstrate that profit motives for elite actors in CAR constitute the preeminent driver of conflict, through which they use disbursed financial incentives, offerings of political power, and/or ethnic/religious grievances to mobilize fighters necessary to achieve their economic goals. Building on these concepts, the PNA serves to demonstrate—in contrast to some popular notions regarding deep-rooted ethnic/religious tensions structuring the conflict—that the

¹Al Jazeera, “Rebels Launch Attacks on Central African Republic's Capital,” Al Jazeera (Al Jazeera, January 13, 2021).

² Romain Esmenaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

³ Nathalia Dukhan, “Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic,” ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁴ Al Jazeera, “Rebels Launch Attacks on Central African Republic's Capital,” Al Jazeera (Al Jazeera, January 13, 2021).

⁵ ACLED, “Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project | Dashboard,” <https://acleddata.com/>.

⁶ USAID Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation, “Conflict Assessment Framework: Version 2.0” (United States Agency for International Development, June 2012).

personal alliances formed during the CPC phase of the war were driven by profit motives, overcoming both ethnic/religious tensions and even bringing together former enemies.

Conflict Driver Misconceptions

Before elucidating the overarching themes of this report, it is imperative to address some of the misconceptions regarding the drivers of the CAR civil war, which make a report of this type necessary. A 2018 Forbes article entitled, “The Religious War in the Central African Republic Continues” is a prime case in point. For the average news consumer who does not regularly follow the civil war in CAR, such misguided characterization in the title alone is dangerous rhetoric.⁷ The author, Ewelina Ochab, writes that “the religious conflict is deeply rooted” and that “the recent attacks are nothing new as religious (and ethnic) conflicts have haunted the country for several years”. While some scholars may grant the author the reality that religious and ethnic grievances can become fault lines in conflict once mobilized by elites, it is clear that the author is not referring to such dynamics, evidenced by her characterization that “the sectarian violence and targeted killings” are “motivated by religion.”⁸

Overarching Themes

As a result of conducting individual-level PEA and PNA, this report highlights three overarching themes pertaining to the civil war in CAR: de facto control over territory for profiteering purposes; the use of financial prospects, power offerings, and ethnic/religious grievances to mobilize fighters; and the formation of armed group alliances for economically opportunistic purposes.

Stakeholder and Mobilization Political Economy Analysis

In order to demonstrate the first two main themes and highlight the preeminence of profit’s role in the conflict, a stakeholder and mobilization political economy analysis has been employed. The

⁷ Dr. Ewelina U. Ochab, “The Religious War in the Central African Republic Continues,” Forbes (Forbes Magazine, May 9, 2018).

⁸ Ibid.

following investigative questions are used to guide this report’s individual-level PEA: (1) interests/goals (2) sources of conflict financing, and (3) coercive capacity.

President Faustin-Archange Touadéra (pro-government)

The President of the Central African Republic, Faustin-Archange Touadéra, who came to power in the midst of the civil war in 2016 and was re-elected in 2020, possesses an interest in the conflict that is similar to other leaders of fragile states: to remain in office to continue receiving its personal financial benefits.⁹ ¹⁰ CAR’s government budget—65% of which is funded by Western governments, the IMF, and the World Bank—is a major source of revenue for Touadéra and his entourage.¹¹ ¹² ¹³ Touadéra also receives protection and supplies from the Sewa Security Services, a Russian mercenary organization that falls under the umbrella of the Wagner Group.¹⁴ In addition to foreign support, Touadéra benefits from state revenues that are derived from the sale of diamonds and timber, as well as taxes on the agriculture and livestock sector.¹⁵

Given his official ‘control’ of the state and significant access to economic resources, Touadéra is able to maintain a strong patronage network in order to bolster his power and mobilize people to act in his interest, which includes permitting government soldiers to loot while on mission in addition to providing resources directly.¹⁶ ¹⁷ Touadéra also mobilizes some support along ethnic lines, specifically

⁹ Nathalia Dukhan, “State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic” (The Sentry, October 2020).

¹⁰ See Annex 1 for official results from CAR 2020 presidential election (*primary source for Touadéra*). Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

¹¹ Africa Confidential, “Touadéra Tilts to Moscow, Losing Western Backing,” *Africa Confidential* 62, no. 11 (May 19, 2021).

¹² 65% during the time period in question. Western governments have since reduced budgetary support.

¹³ Nathalia Dukhan, “State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic” (The Sentry, October 2020).

¹⁴ Nathalia Dukhan, “Central African Republic: Ground Zero for Russian Influence in Central Africa” (Atlantic Council, October 2020).

¹⁵ Mohamed M Diatta, “New Approach to Peace Needed in the Central African Republic” (Institute for Security Studies, March 2021).

¹⁶ Nathalia Dukhan, “State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic” (The Sentry, October 2020).

¹⁷ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

against the Gbaya ethnic group of former president and current CPC leader François Bozizé.¹⁸ Touadéra's ability to engage in neopatrimonialism and provide mining concessions to Russian companies in exchange for mercenary support lends him a high level of coercive capacity to conduct the conflict in his favor.¹⁹

Héritier Doneng (pro-government)

Héritier Doneng engages in the conflict as the head of Les requins, an armed militia in support of President Touadéra.²⁰ ²¹ Above all, Doneng seeks to maintain the benefits of Touadéra's patronage network and therefore has a goal of violently deterring opposition to Touadéra's rule. Since late 2020, Doneng has organized extrajudicial security operations in Bangui, targeting people of Gbaya ethnicity and anyone else believed to have cooperated with the CPC.²² ²³ ²⁴ Doneng receives funding from Touadéra's political party to finance his personal profits and 'security' operations. In addition to ethnic antagonism, Doneng uses these same patronage networks and connections to mobilize fighters, though it is unclear how much coercive capacity he possesses over them.²⁵

Yevgeny Prigozhin (pro-government)

Yevgeny Prigozhin, the financier of the Wagner Group²⁶, a name given to a consortium of companies such as Sewa Security Services and Lobaye Invest, is engaged in the CAR civil war in order to

¹⁸ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

¹⁹ Nathalia Dukhan, "Central African Republic: Ground Zero for Russian Influence in Central Africa" (Atlantic Council, October 2020).

²⁰ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

²¹ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2454 (2019)" (United Nations Security Council, July 30, 2019). (*primary source for Doneng*)

²² Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

²³ Africa Confidential, "Moscow Tilt Poses Risks," *Africa Confidential* 62, no. 19 (September 17, 2021).

²⁴ Africa Confidential, "Touadéra Tilts to Moscow, Losing Western Backing," *Africa Confidential* 62, no. 11 (May 19, 2021).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ While the Wagner Group is not officially registered as its own entity, the name is used to refer to a consortium of companies owned by Prigozhin, including those engaged in paramilitary and mining activities.

secure lucrative mining contracts.²⁷ ²⁸ ²⁹ With the French mission in the country doing little to stem the amount of rebel-controlled territory, Touadéra decided to seek assistance from Prigozhin beginning in 2018.³⁰ Touadéra granted exploration and exploitation licenses to Lobaye Invest, allowing Prigozhin to profit.³¹ ³² Though Prigozhin benefits financially from these activities in CAR, he also is the financier behind them. His coercive capacity is strong, and his ability to mobilize mercenaries and employees of mining companies stems from the profits that accrue to such participants, as well as allowing them to act with relative impunity by harassing civilians and looting.³³ ³⁴

President Vladimir Putin (pro-government)

Russian President Vladimir Putin has significant interests in CAR related to his strongman rule of Russia.³⁵ Though open source evidence of his personal financial incentives is lacking, the exercise of power within the Russian government emphasizes that gains for Russia equal gains for Putin himself. The governance situation in CAR provides Putin the chance to project Russia's great power status with minimal resources and plausible deniability through the activities of the Wagner Group.³⁶ In addition, Putin seeks to secure mining concessions for Russian companies and oligarchs, such as Prigozhin, in order to maintain regime stability and power in the Kremlin, as well as secure necessary resources for the Russian economy.³⁷ Putin's source of financing is primarily the Russian state as well as any other

²⁷ Nathalia Dukhan, "Central African Republic: Ground Zero for Russian Influence in Central Africa" (Atlantic Council, October 2020).

²⁸ Nathalia Dukhan, "State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic" (The Sentry, October 2020).

²⁹ U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Increases Pressure on Russian Financier," U.S. Department of the Treasury (U.S. Department of the Treasury, September 23, 2020). (*primary source for Prigozhin*)

³⁰ Nathalia Dukhan, "State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic" (The Sentry, October 2020).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Amy Mackinnon, "Russia's Wagner Group Doesn't Actually Exist," Foreign Policy, July 6, 2021.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Africa Confidential, "Touadéra Tilts to Moscow, Losing Western Backing," *Africa Confidential* 62, no. 11 (May 19, 2021).

³⁵ The Economist, "Vladimir Putin Flaunts Russia's Increasing Influence in Africa," The Economist (The Economist, October 24, 2019). (*primary source for Putin*)

³⁶ John A. Lechner and Alexandra Lamarche, "Outside Powers Are Making the Conflict in the Central African Republic Worse," Foreign Policy (Foreign Policy, January 22, 2021).

³⁷ Africa Confidential, "Moscow Tilt Poses Risks," *Africa Confidential* 62, no. 19 (September 17, 2021).

financial networks that exceed the scope of this report. Putin's coercive capacity, including among oligarchs such as Prigozhin, is strong and very characteristic of the modern Russian political system.

François Bozizé (pro-rebel)

Former President and now leader of the CPC, François Bozizé, is engaged in the CPC phase of the civil war with the goal of removing President Touadéra from power and installing himself as president in order to reap the personal financial benefits that such power brings.^{38 39} There is no evidence of a specific financing scheme for Bozizé in this phase of the war, though his tenure as president certainly ensured a level of wealth needed to organize this new rebel movement.⁴⁰ In order to mobilize support for the CPC among the rebel leaders whose factions would constitute the alliance, Bozizé relied on the historical relationships that he forged as a major political actor in the country, both as president and ex-president.⁴¹ However, Bozizé's success in convincing these rebel leaders to sign on to the CPC rested on a series of blatantly false promises. Bozizé promised the rebel leaders that they had the backing of the West and neighboring states, which was believable given that many in CAR view the Russian presence as constructing a Cold War-like dynamic. Once this support failed to materialize upon the coalition's founding, he changed the narrative to be that external support would arrive once the CPC had demonstrated its capacity and taken control of Bangui. Lastly, Bozizé promised that if his violent reinstatement to power were successful, he would grant all armed leaders military positions in the administration, as well as immunity from the law and international jurisdictions (e.g., ICC).⁴² These promises amounted to successful mobilization since the rebel leaders who eventually joined the CPC were already concerned that Touadéra would attack them and seize their territory, meaning they all had

³⁸ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

³⁹ See Annex 2 for official document listing Bozizé as head of CPC (*primary source for Bozizé*). Ibid.

⁴⁰ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

interests in regime change to protect their positions and advance their agendas.⁴³⁴⁴ Bozizé was able to mobilize these armed leaders into signing onto the CPC, however he lacked the coercive capacity to centralize or integrate the movement militarily; instead, the CPC constituted a loose network of armed groups operating independently.⁴⁵

Nourredine Adam (pro-rebel)

Nourredine Adam, the leader of the rebel group Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), has multiple interests in the civil war that all relate to financial motives. Ideally, Adam seeks regime change in order to receive a lucrative government position, though he is on the record about being willing to settle for an official partition of the country that would see the northeastern part of the country secede.⁴⁶ Regardless of his role in the de jure government structure, Adam seeks to maintain territorial control that allows him to benefit from the perpetual exploitation of resources.⁴⁷ In order to finance the FPRC and personally benefit from the conflict, Adam engages in illicit gold trade, forcefully recruits youth, and acquires goods looted from humanitarian organizations and state institutions.⁴⁸⁴⁹ Aside from providing a source of income for his fighters, Adam mobilizes support by claiming the Touadéra government is marginalizing Muslims, though the PNA later in this report will demonstrate that such is a façade given his connection to Bozizé, whose government was accused of doing the same.⁵⁰ Therefore, Adam uses a manufactured climate of permanent crisis to justify the FPRC,

⁴³ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁴⁴ See Annex 3 for Abass statement regarding Touadéra’s breaking of promises (*primary source for Abass*). Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁴⁵ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁴⁶ IPIS, “Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping” (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

⁴⁷ Nathalia Dukhan, “Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic,” ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁴⁸ INTERPOL, “Illegal Gold Mining in Central Africa” (INTERPOL, May 2021).

⁴⁹ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁵⁰ IPIS, “Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping” (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

all while profiting from its continued existence.⁵¹ Aside from this ability to mobilize fighters to some workable extent, the level of his coercive capacity is unclear given the changes in leadership structure that have occurred within the FPRC over the years.^{52 53}

Ali Darassa (pro-rebel)

Ali Darassa, leader of the country's most powerful rebel group, Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC), seeks to use the conflict to maintain and attain personal financial benefits.⁵⁴ In addition, Darassa seeks to avoid arrest by the Touadéra government or potentially acquire a lucrative government position under a new regime.^{55 56 57} Darassa reaps personal financial benefits and funds his rebel group's functionality through various sources, all of which depend on his ability to maintain control of territory. Two key sources of Darassa's financing that depend on territorial control are protection rackets and roadblocking taxation.^{58 59 60} One protection racket whose uncovering received significant media attention was that between SUCAF RCA—a sugar refining subsidiary of the French beverage

⁵¹ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁵² IPIS, "Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping" (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

⁵³ See Annex 4 for document from former FPRC political coordinator (*primary source for Adam*). Romain Esmerajaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2507 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, July 8, 2020).

⁵⁴ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

⁵⁵ Romain Esmerajaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁵⁶ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁵⁷ See Annex 5 for Darassa statement criticizing President Touadéra for breaking promises (*primary source for Darassa*). Romain Esmerajaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁵⁸ RFI, "French Wine Giant Castel Accused of Funding Rebels in CAR," Radio France Internationale (Radio France Internationale, August 20, 2021).

⁵⁹ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

⁶⁰ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

conglomerate Castel Group—and Darassa.⁶¹ ⁶² Since SUCAF RCA's refinery was in UPC-controlled territory (until March 2021, when government forces and Russian mercenaries captured the territory), the company negotiated a security arrangement beginning in 2014 that used direct and indirect cash payments, as well as in-kind assistance such as vehicle maintenance and fuel supply, in exchange for Darassa's protection of the company's operations.⁶³ ⁶⁴ These payments from SUCAF RCA primarily benefited Darassa himself, who received roughly \$31,000 annually between the end of 2014 and March 2021.⁶⁵ In addition to SUCAF RCA, Darassa also profited from protection rackets from two gold mining companies: MIDAS Ressources and Industrie Minière de Centrafrique.⁶⁶ Aside from the protection rackets, Darassa also profited from UPC roadblocks that taxed trucks moving goods, mining materials, and even transhumant herders.⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ Though these sources of income and conflict financing significantly benefit Darassa personally, UPC fighters also derive considerable financial benefit from protection rackets and roadblock taxation.⁶⁹ ⁷⁰ Darassa also manufactures support by claiming that the Touadéra government is a threat to the existence of the Fulani and Muslim community, though the primary

⁶¹ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

⁶² RFI, "French Wine Giant Castel Accused of Funding Rebels in CAR," Radio France Internationale (Radio France Internationale, August 20, 2021).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁶⁷ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

⁶⁸ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ The Sentry, "Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic" (The Sentry, August 2021).

mobilizing factor remains economic.⁷¹ Such lucrative enterprises allow Darassa to exercise significant coercive capacity over the country's strongest and best-equipped rebel group.^{72 73}

Mahamat al-Khatim (pro-rebel)

The leader of the armed group Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC), Mahamat al-Khatim, seeks to obtain a lucrative position in a new government, ensure the inclusion of Chadian-Arab citizens of CAR in its government, and maintain territorial control to continue reaping associated profits.^{74 75} Al-Khatim attains personal revenue and financing for his group via the illicit gold trade and taxing pastoralists for cash or cattle.^{76 77} To a greater extent than other current rebel leaders, al-Khatim uses politicized ethnicity to mobilize support, claiming that the government is a threat to the Chadian-Arab community and that armed rebellion will help ensure the community's political inclusion.⁷⁸ In stark contrast to Darassa, al-Khatim maintains rather weak control over MPC, with internal rivalries and potential moles undermining his coercive capacity.^{79 80}

Sidiki Abass (pro-rebel)

Sidiki Abass, the leader of the rebel group Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation (3R) until his death in March 2021, created the group in 2015 as a supposed bulwark against anti-Balaka attacks on

⁷¹ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁷² Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁷³ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ See Annex 6 for al-Khatim document noting his attention to 'liberate' government buildings in territory under MPC control (*primary source for al-Khatim*). Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2454 (2019)" (United Nations Security Council, December 6, 2019).

⁷⁶ INTERPOL, "Illegal Gold Mining in Central Africa" (INTERPOL, May 2021).

⁷⁷ IPIS, "Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping" (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

⁷⁸ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁷⁹ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁸⁰ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

the Peuhl community, though his interests in the civil war included the economic resources that accrued from controlling territory.⁸¹ Abass' economic interests and sources of financing primarily stem from the gold and diamond trade.⁸² Abass uses 3R fighters to exact an illegal parallel taxation system on mining companies and artisanal miners, charging weekly fees to use the mines. At times, Abass sells stolen minerals through the group's own illicit commercial networks.^{83 84 85} Creating a perceived threat among the Peuhl community and providing access to material wealth allowed Abass to mobilize fighters, though his level of coercive capacity was indiscernible from consulted sources.^{86 87}

Maxime Mokom (pro-rebel)

Maxime Mokom, leader of the Mokom branch of Anti-balaka⁸⁸, seeks the overthrow of the Touadéra regime and the restoration of Bozizé as president. Mokom engages in opportunistic alliances to provide himself and his comparatively weak rebel group the opportunity to gain the most leverage and benefits.⁸⁹ Given Mokom's close personal relationship with Bozizé, the patronage networks that would stem from Bozizé's return to power highlight the financial motives that engender Mokom's personal

⁸¹ Human Rights Watch, "Central African Republic: Rebel Violence Threatens Elections," Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch, December 23, 2020).

⁸² Nathalia Dukhan, "State of Prey: Proxies, Predators, and Profiteers in the Central African Republic" (The Sentry, October 2020).

⁸³ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁸⁴ INTERPOL, "Illegal Gold Mining in Central Africa" (INTERPOL, May 2021).

⁸⁵ Alexandre Jaillon and Guillaume de Brier, "Mapping Artisanal Mining Sites in the Western Central African Republic" (International Peace Information Services, November 2019).

⁸⁶ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

⁸⁷ Alexandre Jaillon and Guillaume de Brier, "Mapping Artisanal Mining Sites in the Western Central African Republic" (International Peace Information Services, November 2019).

⁸⁸ There was a leadership split in Anti-balaka around 2015.

⁸⁹ Nathalia Dukhan, "Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic," ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

interests in the conflict.⁹⁰ This connection and promise of patronage benefits also constitute his source of mobilizing fighters, though his coercive capacity over the group is rather weak.^{91 92}

Dieudonné Ndomate (pro-rebel)

The specific personal interests of Dieudonné Ndomate, leader of the Ngaïsonna branch of Anti-balaka until his arrest in May 2021, were indiscernible from consulted sources.⁹³ Ndomate took over the leadership of the Ngaïsonna branch after Patrice Ngaïsonna's arrest in December 2018.^{94 95} However, an ICC report on Ngaïsonna's sources of financing may provide insight into those of Ndomate. Such sources include illegal tolls, contributions from local populations, extortion of local Muslim populations in exchange for protection, and theft/ransom.⁹⁶ Ndomate's source to mobilize people is not explicitly stated in consulted sources, though access to economic resources and politicized ethnic/religious mobilization are likely. His weak coercive capacity over his fighters, however, is explicitly stated.⁹⁷

Political Network Analysis

The following PNA, which focuses on the pro-rebel side, seeks to demonstrate the third main theme and above all highlight that the profit motives evidenced in the PEA are superior to any ethnic/religious motivations. The CPC constitutes the latest iteration in a series of financially opportunistic alliances which form among previously-warring actors with supposedly deep-rooted grievances.

⁹⁰ Aurélien Llorca et al., "Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2196 (2015)" (United Nations Security Council, December 21, 2015). (*primary source for Mokom*).

⁹¹ IPIS, "Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping" (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

⁹² Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

⁹³ Journal de Bangui, "RCA : Précisions Sur l'Arrestation De l'Ex-Ministre Dieudonné Ndomaté," Journal de Bangui, May 18, 2021.

⁹⁴ IPIS, "Central African Republic: A Conflict Mapping" (International Peace Information Service, August 2018).

⁹⁵ ICC, "Situation in Central African Republic II: Patrice-Edouard Ngaïsonna Arrested for Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes," International Criminal Court (International Criminal Court, December 12, 2018).

⁹⁶ Situation in the Central African Republic II in the Case of the Prosecutor v. Patrice-Edouard Ngaïsonna and Alfred Yekatom (International Criminal Court March 19, 2021). (*primary source for Ndomate*)

⁹⁷ Romain Esmenjaud et al., "Midterm Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic Extended Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2536 (2020)" (United Nations Security Council, January 27, 2021).

In early December 2020, Bozizé engaged in a tour to contact various armed group leaders in order to recruit them for the CPC.⁹⁸ Many of these leaders⁹⁹ had been members of the Séléka coalition that ousted Bozizé from power in 2013, though such former grievances—many of which expressed themselves as politicized ethnic/religious violence—did not seem to matter given the opportunity that a new rebel coalition would provide for these profiteering warlords.^{100 101} In fact, Bozizé had established an alliance with ex-Séléka leaders as early as 2015, eventually forming “the Coalition” that included Mokom, Adam, and al-Khatim, among others who did not eventually join the CPC.^{102 103} Darassa and the UPC continually refused to join “the Coalition,” sparking significant fighting between the respective groups, though such animosity also seems to have been overcome upon the CPC’s formation.^{104 105} Lechner and Lamarche sum up this dynamic, writing, “political and economic power struggles often trump identity,” juxtaposing 3R’s alleged purpose to protect Muslims from anti-Balaka with their alliance with them under the CPC.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

The individual-level PEA and PNA undertaken in this report illustrate the three main themes attributed to CAR’s civil war, all of which support the overarching argument: elite actors engaged in the conflict are primarily driven by personal profit. The PEA demonstrated the first theme for each actor, uncovering how territorial control is necessary for personal revenue, in addition to the second theme,

⁹⁸ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

⁹⁹ Including Adam, al-Khatim, and Darassa.

¹⁰⁰ The Sentry, “Cultivating Atrocities: French Sugar and Beverage Giant Castel Group Linked to Funding of Brutal Militias in Central African Republic” (The Sentry, August 2021).

¹⁰¹ Alexis Arieff, “Crisis in the Central African Republic” (Congressional Research Service, July 8, 2021).

¹⁰² Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

¹⁰³ Nathalia Dukhan, “Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Factions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic,” ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Romain Esmenjaud et al., “Final Report of the Panel of Experts in Accordance with Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2536 (2020)” (United Nations Security Council, June 25, 2021).

¹⁰⁶ John A. Lechner and Alexandra Lamarche, “Outside Powers Are Making the Conflict in the Central African Republic Worse,” Foreign Policy (Foreign Policy, January 22, 2021).

that such revenues as well as politicized ethnic/religious grievances could be employed to mobilize fighters in support of their profiteering agendas.¹⁰⁷ The PNA provided further evidence to the preeminence of the profit motive, demonstrating how armed group leaders who had previously warred with each other were able to overcome such animosity and ethnic/religious tensions for profitable opportunism.¹⁰⁸ Despite its logistical hurdles and lack of centralization (which was primarily due to self-interest), the formation of the CPC should leave no doubt that profit motives have driven the civil war in the Central African Republic. Though ethnic/religious grievances may be politicized in order to mobilize support for armed group operations, such grievances are simply a means to an end rooted in profiteering warlordism.

¹⁰⁷ Nathalia Dukhan, “Splintered Warfare: Alliances, Affiliations, and Agendas of Armed Fractions and Politico-Military Groups in the Central African Republic,” ed. Jacinth Planer (The Enough Project, August 2017).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Official 2020 CAR presidential election results

Nombre total d'électeurs inscrits : 1 858 236

Nombre total de votants : 655 054

Nombre total de bulletins nuls : 22 046

Nombre total de bulletins blanches : 19 284

Total votants par dérogation : 14 308

Suffrages valablement exprimés : 599 416

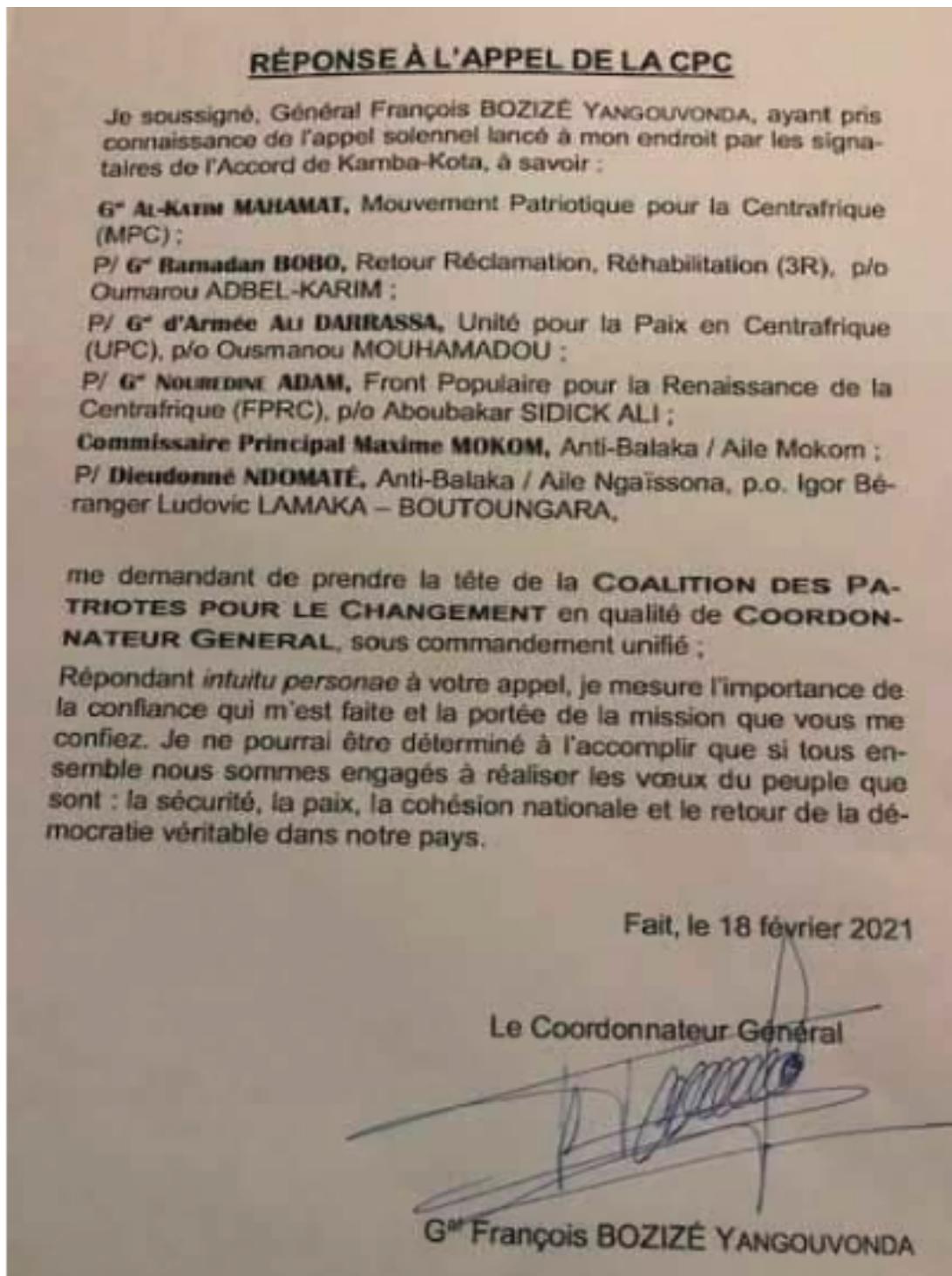
Taux de participation : 35,25%

ONT OBTENU :

Candidats	Voix obtenues	%
FAUSTIN ARCHANGE TOUADERA	318 626	53,16
ANICET GEORGES DOLOGUELE	130 017	21,69
MARTIN ZIGUELE	45 206	7,54
DESIRE NZANGA BILAL KOLINGBA	22 157	3,70
BENDERET CREPIN MBOLI-GOUUMBA	19 271	3,21
SYLVAIN EUGENE NGAKOUTOU PATASSE	8 760	1,46
AUGUSTIN AGOU	8 436	1,41
JEAN SERGE BOKASSA	7 870	1,31
MAHAMAT KAMOUN	7 536	1,26
ALEXANDRE FERDINAND N'GUENDET	6 668	1,11
ABDOU KARIM MECKASSOUA	5 099	0,85
CATHERINE SAMBA PANZA NEE SOUGA	5 078	0,85
ELOIS ANGUIMATE	3 710	0,62
SERGE GHISLAIN DJORIE	3 392	0,57
CYRIAQUE GONDA	2 973	0,50
ARISTIDE BRIAND REBOAS	2 454	0,41
NICOLAS TIANGAYE	2 163	0,36

Le candidat Faustin Archange TOUADERA ayant obtenu la majorité absolue des suffrages valablement exprimés est PROCLAME ELU AU PREMIER TOUR PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE.

Annex 2: Document signed on February 18, 2021 confirming Bozizé as general coordinator of CPC. Note that CPC was formed earlier, though this document cemented the leadership in writing.



Annex 3: Sidiki Abass statement criticizing President Touadéra for breaking promises, evidencing Abass' assessment that Touadéra posed a threat to his group, 3R



Annex 4: Statement written by former FPRC political coordinator, Djafar Adoum, criticizing Adam's leadership as illegitimate



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

La Coordination Générale du FPRC condamne la récentes attaques survenues dans la ville de N'dele et adresse ses condoléances les plus attristées à toutes les familles des victimes de l'attaque meurtrière du 29 Avril 2020, faisant plusieurs morts parmi les personnes civiles des nombreux BLESSÉS.

Ces conflits intercommunautaires instrumentalisés ont compromis dangereusement la paix et la sécurité et ont aggravé les souffrances des populations locales vulnérables. Elle appelle à l'arrêt immédiat des hostilités et invite les communautés à bannir la revanche et à faire preuve de la culture de la paix, de l'amour de son prochain pour le mieux vivre ensemble comme au passé.

La Coordination Générale du FPRC rappelle à tous nos frères belligérants que nous sommes unis par de liens ancestraux que nous devons jalousement les préserver à l'heure actuelle pour l'avenir de la génération montante de notre pays qui est la République Centrafricaine.

La Coordination Générale félicite le Gouvernement et les partenaires pour leurs efforts consentis pour la cause de la recherche de la paix, en dépit du contexte socio-sécuritaire difficile que connaît le pays à travers la mobilisation des ressources et le redéploiement des Forces de Défense et Sécurité Intérieure (FDSI) indispensable à la restauration de l'Administration Générale dans la Préfecture de Bamingui-Bangoran.

En outre elle lance un pressant appel au Gouvernement et aux partenaires financiers à procurer de l'aide humanitaire aux populations en détresse victimes de conflits.

Par ailleurs, la Coordination Générale invite les paisibles et vaillantes populations de Bamingui-Bangoran à se mobiliser massivement en vue d'accueillir les Forces Armées centrafricaines et à collaborer étroitement avec elles pour rétablir la paix et sécurité dans cette localité encore fragile.

De surcroît, elle demande aux populations à ne plus céder aux manœuvres de manipulations.

La Coordination Générale porte à l'attention de l'opinion tant nationale qu'internationale qu'elle est victime d'acharnement perpétré par NOURADINE ADAM et ABDOULEYE ISSENE RAMADANE lesquels ont été désignés lors de l'Assemblée Générale de BRIA du 18 au 19 Octobre 2016 sous l'initiative

de la Coordination Générale pour un mandat de trois ans non renouvelable. Dans tous les cas, la Coordination Générale a été élue et non désignée par NOURADINE ADAM, et elle s'est adhérée fidèlement depuis la négociation à KHARTOUM et à ADDIS-ABEBA aux engagements solennels issus de l'APPR-RCA en vue de parvenir à des solutions de paix durable en République Centrafricaine ; ce qui a permis aux membres du FPRC de choisir le même Coordonnateur Général pour les représenter au Comité Exécutif de Suivi(CES) de l'APPR-RCA, validé par Décret Présidentiel.

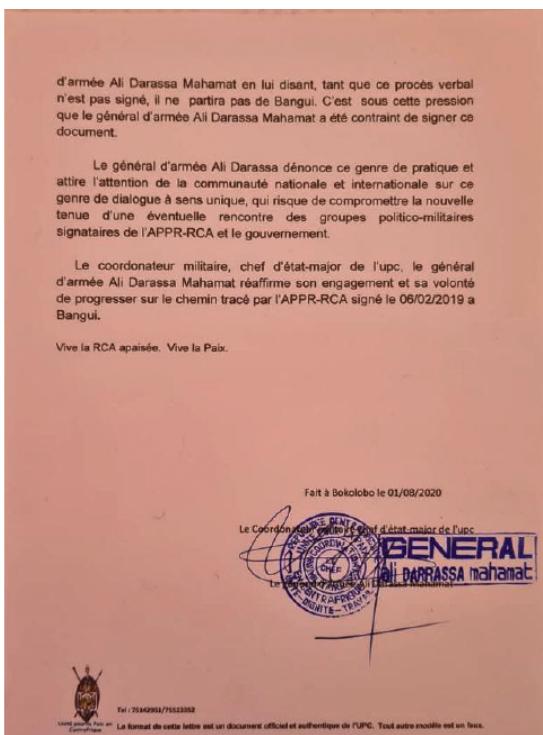
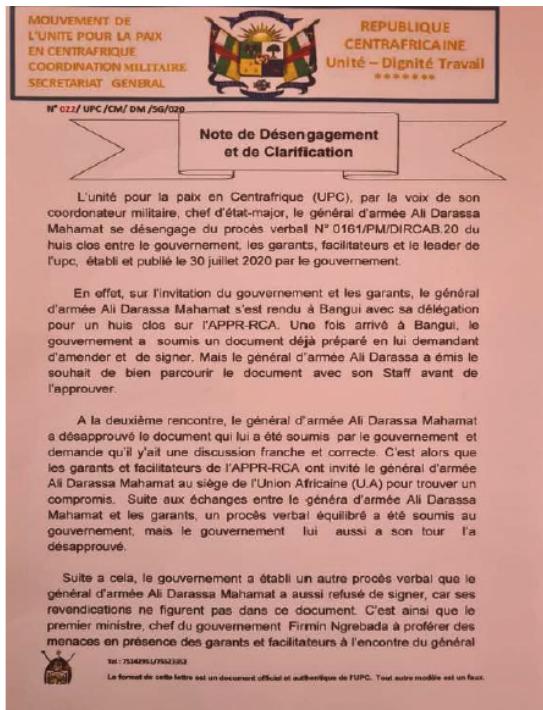
Force est de constater que le démarche de la paix entamée depuis Décembre 2018 jusqu'à nos jours NOURADINE ADAM et ABDOULEYE ISSENE RAMADANE qui n'ont pas la compétence de décider démettre de ses fonctions tout membre de la Coordination tenté par tous les moyens d'acharnement, d'intimidation pour dissuader le Coordonnateur Générale en vue leur laisser libre cours afin de maintenir la statu quo. De tout ce qui précède la Coordination Générale se désolidarisé complètement de NOURADINE ADAM et ABDOULEYE ISSENE dans le but d'oeuvrer favorablement pour la paix, sécurité, unité nationale, la réconciliation et le développement socio-économique et la sauvegarde de l'intégrité territoriale et remet en cause leur leadership.

Fait N'Délé, le 3 Mai 2020

Le Coordonnateur Général du FPRC, MEMBRE DU
COMITE EXÉCUTIF DE SUIVI DE L'APPR-RCA



Annex 5: Ali Darassa statement criticizing President Touadéra for breaking promises, evidencing Darassa's assessment that Touadéra posed a threat to his group, UPC



Annex 6: al-Khatim document noting his attention to 'liberate' government buildings in territory under MPC control.



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC), relatif à l'application de l'accord politique pour la paix et la réconciliation (APPR)

L'Etat-major du Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC) informe l'opinion nationale et internationale et les garants de l'accord de Khartoum signé à Bangui le 06 Février 2019.

Nous portons à votre connaissance que nous procéderons au démantèlement des barrières illégaux ainsi que la libération des bâtiments administratifs dans la zone sous contrôle MPC dans les 72 heures qui suivent.

Le MPC reste toujours attaché à l'esprit de l'accord de Khartoum et à ses engagements pris devant la communauté internationale pour la sortie définitive de la crise en République Centrafricaine.

Fait à Kaga-Bandoro, le 07 Juillet 2019

Le Général **ALKATIM MAHAMAT**

Chef d'Etat-major du mouvement

