

# Mapping Conflict Motives: Central African Republic

Steven Spittaels & Filip Hilgert



# Editorial

**Research and editing:** Steven Spittaels & Filip Hilgert  
**Layout:** Anne Hullebroeck

Antwerp 17 February 2009

**Caption photo Front Page:** Bush fires preceding the trek of transhumant cowherds. The fires herald the beginning of the dry season and the resumption of bandit attacks (IPIS 2008)

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all their interviewees.

The authors would like to thank the following organisations for their input: HDPT CAR, OCHA, UNHCR, BONUCA, UNDSS, LACCEG, ECOFAC, FNEC, PARPAF, BECDOR, DPER and JUPEDDEC

The authors would like to thank the following organisations for their logistic support: OCHA, WFP, Triangle GH, IMC, DRC, the Episcopate of Kaga-Bandoro, Merlin, CAM, and the EU



“This project is funded by the European Union. The content of this project is the sole responsibility of IPIS and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.”

# Summary

Compared to its notorious neighbours to the north, east and south, the Central African Republic is an unknown country with few inhabitants. Nevertheless, its population has been suffering from violence for a long time.

Not many areas in the Central African Republic are really secure. Although the country is scarcely populated, it is tormented by a multitude of armed actors. These belligerents use their weapons for a diversity of reasons but they have one thing in common: each of them would be a weak opponent for any well-organised state, but then this is exactly what the country lacks.

Firstly, there are three Central African rebel groups with armed men on the ground that exert authority in the areas under their control. The APRD controls two contiguous areas in the Northwest and North of the country. It is an amateurish movement that seems sincere in its assertion that it fights for the security of the region. There is, however, an important difference, in the relationship with the local population and in the human rights record, of the two most important commanders in the field. The APRD is not strong enough to challenge the incumbent government in Bangui. So far it has proven strong enough to survive but it seems to seek a political way out of its struggle.

Another rebel group is the UFDR that operates in the Northeast of the CAR. It has launched a series of surprisingly efficient attacks against some larger town centres in 2006 and 2007, but in 2008 it was the only rebel group that did not clash with the Central African Republic's army. The UFDR adheres to the agreements concluded with the CAR government and seems ready to continue its struggle politically. Whether the UFDR's willingness is caused by war fatigue and a survival reflex, or by the honest hope that its grievances will be answered politically, is not clear. It is clear, however, that the movement has lost a lot of support in the neglected region and that it is even challenged militarily by a number of dissidents.

The third rebel group with a military presence in the CAR is the FDPC. It is by far the weakest of the three and it had been dormant until November 2008. The only reason why it might be stirring again would be to strengthen its bargaining position in the ongoing peace process or simply to disturb it.

Besides rebel activity, the population suffers from aggression by a wide array of other armed actors including their own security services. The FACA has a terrible human rights record and it is not capable of providing security for the population.

Much of the violence is committed by foreigners. From Sudan, each year large groups of heavily armed poachers enter the CAR to plunder its wildlife resources.

From the DRC, the LRA has carried out a violent raid in the Southeast of the CAR for several weeks, resulting in more than 100 abductees. From Chad and Sudan, armed bands of cattle herders cross the country borders to pasture their herds. They have clashed on several occasions with the local population and in their wake armed banditry thrives.

These armed bandits, generally referred to as coupeurs de route or zaraguinas, are probably the biggest security problem of the CAR. They disturb the little traffic that exists in the CAR, including commercial transports. During their armed attacks they often take hostages. Some of the bandits are Central African but many others are from Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria.

Two different international peacekeeping missions are deployed on CAR territory: MICOPAX and EUFOR. The numbers of both are limited and insufficient to restore security.

The current picture of the CAR looks grim but an increased presence of the state and a reformed national army could solve most of the security problems caused by foreigners. In order to tackle the internal grievances of people from several regions, other measures are required, most of them on the socio-economic level.

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Part 1: The conflict actors</b>	<b>7</b>
The APRD	7
The UFDR	10
The FACA	11
Other	13
<b>Part 2: Presentation of the map collection</b>	<b>21</b>
Cartographic sources	21
The basic map 'Central African Republic'	22
The 'dynamic' maps	22
The 'static' maps	22
The report map	24
<b>Part 3: Analysis</b>	<b>25</b>
The East	25
The Northwest	33
The North	37
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>46</b>



Demobilised child soldiers awaiting medical inspection by humanitarian organisation (IPIS 2008)

## Introduction

“Mapping Conflict Motives: Central African Republic” is the third study in the IPIS mapping series<sup>1</sup>. It deals with the presence, behaviour and motivation of the armed groups that operated in the Central African Republic in 2008.

For each of the warring parties, IPIS compares four possible motivations – greed, grievance, power and survival - that might drive their behaviour and tests them against reality.

In a first part, the armed groups on Central African soil are presented. It is explained who commands them, where they are deployed, what their political programme is, what their strength is and how they affect security in the CAR.

The middle part explains how IPIS has produced a collection of maps to underpin its analysis. As with the previous reports, the text document makes constant reference to this collection that constitutes an integral part of the analysis. The maps can be consulted online at: [www.ipisresearch.be/mapping\\_car.php](http://www.ipisresearch.be/mapping_car.php). They show the situation as it was in November 2008.

The online maps provide information on the country as a whole, but the text only discusses the areas where serious security problems exist. Those areas are the Northwest, the North and the East of the CAR. The three conflict zones are discussed in detail in the analytical part of the report, which is the third and final part of the text.

In the analytical part, arguments are built on the true motivations of armed groups. Such arguments are constructed through the comparison of maps. For example, the positions of a rebel group and the confrontations in which it has been involved, are geographically compared to the presence of natural resources. From this comparison, it can be inferred whether the group actually has access or has tried to gain access to natural resources. Consequently, a decisive answer can be given to

<sup>1</sup> More information on the mapping project and the methodology used is available on the ‘mapping’ homepage at: [www.ipisresearch.be/mapping](http://www.ipisresearch.be/mapping).

the question whether the armed group in its fight is motivated by the profit from trafficking in such resources.

The maps are not the only source IPIS uses to explain the behaviour of combatants. The general insights generated by the maps are complemented with knowledge gathered in the field and with the available written sources.

Reliable (security) information on a conflict area is hard to find. Therefore the data on our maps are not exhaustive, although they give a clear indication of the situation. IPIS welcomes any additional information or corrections that could be added to our maps ([mapping@ipisresearch.be](mailto:mapping@ipisresearch.be)). The maps are not only intended to provide answers but also to raise important questions. We invite others to use them as a framework for further thinking and action.

The CAR is a country most people in Europe know very little of, if anything at all. This is no surprise, since it is almost never covered by the international press. It is not always clear why some countries receive less attention than others. In the case of the CAR, the lack of problems and misery cannot be the reason. In January 2009, more than 5% of its population was still in forced displacement and throughout 2008 half of its prefectures have suffered attacks from armed groups, resulting in one fourth of the population being affected by the violence<sup>2</sup>. Looking wider than the security issue, we find the Central African Republic ranking 178<sup>th</sup> of the 179 countries included in the Human Development Index of the UNDP.

---

<sup>2</sup> HDPT CAR, *Central African Republic Fact Sheet*, February 2009.



General Damane of the UFDR and a bodyguard (IPIS 2008)

The titles in the left column refer to the map that should be consulted while reading the text

## Rebels

# Part 1: The conflict actors

## The APRD

The APRD (*Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie*, Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy) is the most widespread rebel movement on Central African soil. It occupies most of the territory between Ngaounday/Bocaranga in the northwest and Kaga-Bandoro/Kabo in the north. It came into existence immediately after the presidential elections of 2005. Its membership is heterogeneous. Among its ranks are FACA deserters (*Forces Armées Centrafricaines*, Central African Armed Forces), Central African 'ex-liberators'<sup>3</sup>, Chadian 'ex-liberators', local self-defence groups and converted road bandits (BOX 1). The command structure is equally complex. The current makeshift leadership of the APRD consists of a political chief, former Minister of Defence Jean-Jacques Demafouth, who is in charge of negotiating with the government, and a number of military commanders. Demafouth lives in Paris where he works as a lawyer. In the field there are several leading figures. The most influential seems to be 'Colonel' Laurent Djim-Woei Bebiti, who is generally referred to as 'the spokesman'. Everyone who has to deal with the APRD in

<sup>3</sup> Fighters who helped Bozizé overthrow the Patassé regime in 2003.

the field considers him the principal chief of the movement. However, apart from Laurent, the APRD boasts two other colonels and even a general. 'Colonel' Maradas Lakoué is another field commander who consistently claims to take his orders from Laurent on the one hand, but on the other hand seems to exert independent control over the eastern part of the APRD territory. 'Colonel' Bertin Wafio used to be the lead commander of the APRD around Paoua. Currently he acts as an advisor and in this capacity has accompanied Demafouth to some of the peace talks. Finally, a 'general' with a Chadian background called 'Doumran' or 'Doumro' has been spotted on several occasions among the APRD ranks<sup>4</sup>. Supposedly he has taken the lead in several military operations in the past. Laurent and Lakoué claim it was he who promoted them to the rank of colonel.

With the appointment of Demafouth as political chief and principal negotiator of the APRD, it has become clear that the influence of ex-President Patassé over the movement is minimal. According to the APRD command in the field, there is no relation between them and Patassé, stating that he never did anything beneficial for his home region<sup>5</sup>.

### **BOX 1: Com-zone Félix**

The story of 'Commandant de zone' Félix, related to IPIS by a humanitarian worker<sup>6</sup>, is a good illustration of the heterogeneous composition of the APRD.

*"Félix is a Com-zone in the very North of the CAR at the Chadian border. After his parents had been killed by the FACA, he decided to take revenge. He attacked an army patrol and took a weapon. With the weapon he went to present himself to Laurent who then declared him to be a member of the APRD. Félix has no regrets for joining the APRD but he points out that not everybody joined for the same reasons as him. He has seen many profiteers who have only joined the APRD in search of women and profit".*

The military organisation of the APRD is rather improvised. The area under its control is divided into several zones of command. The number of these zones seems to vary according to source and time but there are certainly no less than 6 and no more than 12. At the head of each zone stands a "com-zone". The total number of APRD fighters is difficult to estimate, because they operate in some remote corners and many among them are only part-time rebels. Most cited in reports is the number of 1000 combatants. Not all the APRD combatants are armed though. The equipment and weaponry of the APRD is very limited if not outright poor. It has no uniforms and no vehicles except for a few motorcycles. Its firepower consists of a mixture of assault rifles (AK, FAL and Galil), hunting rifles and a few rocket launchers (RPGs)<sup>7</sup>. The munitions for the hunting rifles are often 'homemade'.

Despite more than 3 years of existence, the APRD has not developed a real political programme. Demafouth has not drafted a document that explains the grievances and objectives of his movement and neither has the military command on the ground<sup>8</sup>. The APRD has multiple enemies. According

<sup>4</sup> Several interviews by IPIS with international and national aid workers in Paoua and Kaga-Bandoro, conducted in October and November 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD command in the vicinity of Paoua, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Interview by IPIS with humanitarian in Bangui, October 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Information from observations and interviews by IPIS researchers, November 2008.

<sup>8</sup> IPIS researchers asked for a written document on APRD grievances to both J.-J. Demafouth in

to Colonel Laurent the APRD fights the FACA, the *coupeurs de route*, the Chadian army and everybody else who threatens the Central African territory and its people. The reasons he gives for fighting the Central African Republic's government can be summarised as follows<sup>9</sup>:

- The country suffers from foreign aggression. Chadian elements that helped President Bozizé come to power in 2003 have become road bandits and spread terror.
- The state security services commit grave human rights violations against the population.
- The economy was destroyed by the current regime. Bozizé and his allies marched on Bangui plundering and they continued to do so after they took over power. The economy needs rebuilding.
- Because of the above, radical changes are required. The regime has betrayed the country and needs to be replaced. If necessary, the APRD will conquer the whole territory.

Looking at the points above, it is clear that the APRD claims to strive for the security of the Central African Republic and its people. It bears a serious grudge against President Bozizé and seeks to change the regime. It is eager to take up political offices itself (as is illustrated by its participation in the second government of Prime Minister Faustin Touadéra).

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2008, the APRD was the last of the major rebel groups to sign a peace agreement with the Central African government in the Gabonese capital of Libreville. The short text stipulates the cessation of hostilities, the start-up of a DDR programme and the promulgation of a general amnesty law. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June the APRD also signed the 'overall peace agreement' between the government of the Central African Republic and the three main rebel groups, which reiterated all previous engagements taken by the signing parties during separate negotiations (BOX 2). Colonel Laurent made it clear that the APRD had opted for peace awaiting the then forthcoming 'inclusive political dialogue'. Should this dialogue fail to achieve significant results (regime change), the APRD will not hesitate to resume its military operations<sup>10</sup>.

### **BOX 2: The Libreville peace process**

A Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Central African Republic's government and the different rebel groups was to be signed on 21 June 2008 in Libreville (Gabon) under the auspices of the Gabonese President Omar Bongo. The three active rebel groups had each signed separate accords with the government before: the FDPC in Syrte (Libya) in February 2007, the UFDR in Birao in April 2007 and the APRD in Libreville in May 2008.

---

October 2008 and to Colonel Djim-Woei in November 2008. Neither could give such a text. Demafouth claimed that only his people on the ground have such a document. Laurent first said he would only reveal his programme at the negotiation table of the 'inclusive dialogue'. At a later point he showed <sup>a</sup> handwritten document that dealt with the APRD's position on the DDR process rather than being a political manifesto.

<sup>9</sup> The following paragraph is based on an interview with Colonel Laurent and his political advisor (November 2008). It has to be noted that what they have described as their cause considerably differs from the reasons given by Colonel Lakoué. We will discuss this further in the analysis part (chapter 3) of this report.

<sup>10</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD command in the vicinity of Paoua, conducted in November 2008.

The APRD and the UFDR signed the CPA (although the ceasefire between the APRD and the FACA was afterwards broken on several occasions). The FDPC did not and remained outside the Libreville peace process throughout the rest of 2008.

On 7 December 2008, one day before the start of an 'Inclusive Political Dialogue' in Bangui, the MLCJ of Abakar Sabone signed the overall peace agreement of Libreville and acceded to the peace process. The MLCJ has no troops in the CAR but it is one of the movements that formerly constituted the UFDR. A few days later also the UFR of Florian Ndjadder, another inactive and army-less politico-military movement, joined the CPA.

## The UFDR

The *Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement* (Union of the Democratic Forces for Unity) is the younger of the two main rebel groups. It was only created in September 2006, as an alliance between three separate groups. At that time, the two leading figures of the movement were its chairman Michel Am Nondroko Djotodia and its spokesman Abakar Sabone. Both leaders were arrested shortly after the UFDR's major attacks against Birao, Ndélé, Sam-Ouandja and Ouadda in September and October 2006. Currently, the principal chief of the UFDR is 'General' Damane Zakaria, although Djotodia and Sabone (both have been released in the meantime) do not accept his leadership.

The leadership issues of the UFDR might explain why its military position in the region is not undisputed<sup>11</sup>. Another explanation might be that the movement is not as ethnically representative as before. Since its creation, the core of the rebel movement had always been formed by combatants from the Gula community, the largest in the Vakaga prefecture. Other ethnicities were represented too, especially the Runga, who constitute the second largest community in the region. However, after roughly two years under the leadership of General Damane, an ethnic Gula, the movement has become almost exclusively Gula. Its ethnic shift has affected the legitimacy of and support for the UFDR.

## Rebels

The UFDR controls areas of the Vakaga and Haute-Kotto prefectures in the Northeast of the country. UFDR forces are concentrated in the Tiringoulou-Gordil area and in Sam-Ouandja. After signing a peace agreement with the Central African government in April 2007, it operates in coordination with the FACA.

The UFDR combatants have the reputation of being vehement fighters. In general, they are better trained and equipped than their Northwestern counterparts. Many of the UFDR combatants are former park rangers that received extensive training from French military advisors in the framework of the ECOFAC programme and its predecessor PDRN. Moreover, they are experienced combatants because of their permanent fight in the area against heavily armed units of Sudanese poachers. The UFDR disposes of a number of motorcycles and one four-wheel drive. All combatants are armed

<sup>11</sup> The UFDR has been targeted during an attack on Sam-Ouandja in November 2008 by an armed group of which the composition and agenda are not yet clear. After they had been driven back initially, they successfully repulsed the assailants the same night.

with recent assault rifles and many wear complete uniforms<sup>12</sup>. They are supplied with ammunition by the Central African Republic's government<sup>13</sup>. According to a list that has been submitted in the framework of the Libreville peace process, the UFDR numbers 1240 fighters<sup>14</sup>.

The UFDR has respected the ceasefire they have agreed upon in March 2007 for more than 20 months. They claim they will continue to adhere to the peace process as long as they feel that their grievances are being addressed. According to General Damane the UFDR denounces 4 concrete problems:

- The impassability of the roads in the region
- The lack of health care
- The lack of education
- The insufficient access to potable water

To the four problems cited by General Damane as the prime motivations driving the UFDR one can add two others that are regularly mentioned by UFDR representatives:

- The insecurity in the region
- The marginalisation of the region, which is hardly represented in the different government institutions.

The UFDR is ready to participate in Central African politics and would not turn down executive responsibilities. It claims that in this it will abide by the decision of the incumbent regime<sup>15</sup>.

The UFDR was the second of the Central African Republic's rebel groups to sign a peace agreement with the government, on 13 April 2007. Unlike the first group (the FDPC, cf. infra), the UFDR has adhered to the agreement and has continued to respect the ceasefire.

## The FACA

The Central African Republic's army, the FACA, is a small and poorly equipped army. It employs 5000 people but only 1500 of them are operational soldiers. Among those 5000, there are around 1000 members of the Republican Guard (*Garde Républicaine*), commonly called Presidential Guard (*Garde Présidentielle*, GP). The GP performs 6 duties<sup>16</sup>:

- The most obvious task of the GP is to guard the president, his family and his properties. In general, this duty falls to the BPSI (*Bataillon de Protection et de Sécurité des Institutions*, Battalion for the Protection and Security of the Institutions) but it is specifically the CPR (*Compagnie de Protection Rapprochée*, Close Protection Company, approximately

<sup>12</sup> There are two different explanations for the considerable level of equipment available to the UFDR. A first explanation is the alleged logistic support from Khartoum at the inception of the UFDR. A second is the rumour that several shipments of arms were distributed to the Gula in 2002 by the then Minister of Health, who originated from the region. Supposedly the minister wanted to help his community in its fight against heavily armed bands of transhumant cowherds. In that year the confrontations had been particularly violent.

<sup>13</sup> Interview by IPIS with Damane Zakaria in Birao, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Interview by IPIS with UFDR negotiator and spokesman Djarnib Grebaye in Bangui, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Interview by IPIS with Damane Zakaria in Birao, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Information from interviews by IPIS with several military advisors to the FACA, conducted in October and November 2008.

40 men) that is assigned to bodyguard President Bozizé<sup>17</sup>. Also some Chadian elements remain within the BPSI. They escort the president from his residence to the presidential palace in the centre of Bangui.

- Besides the BPSI, the GP comprises an Honorary Battalion (approximately 120 men) that is only deployed for ceremonial purposes.
- Another separate unit within the GP, the Territorial Battalion (approximately 350 men), is responsible for securing several prisons throughout the country.
- The BPSI secures a few other sites of strategic interest, such as the Boali power plant.
- Although officially a task for the criminal police or the gendarmerie, BPSI units stationed in Bangui are sometimes involved in crime-fighting police missions.
- The GP is the only branch of the FACA possessing armoured support vehicles armed with 15.4 mm calibre machine guns. Almost every military operation launched by the FACA is therefore accompanied by a BPSI unit.

Without an immediate connection to the six tasks described above, the Presidential Guard has also been spotted guarding the mining sites exploited by the company 'Good Speed'<sup>18</sup>.

Among the remaining 4000 FACA there are military engineering units, fire fighters, support staff and a large group (more than 700) of inactive soldiers above the retirement age.

## FACA

The majority of the FACA is posted in Bangui. Positions in the interior of the country are spread across 6 military regions. 1200 of the operational soldiers are stationed outside Bangui for periods of at least 8 months. The remaining 300 operational FACA are kept in Bangui as reserve. FACA infrastructure is poor. There are no suitable buildings to quarter soldiers and therefore overnight they stay at home. Because no secure armouries exist within the army bases, each soldier takes his weapon home with him.

Morale of the FACA is low. On top of the lack of equipment and infrastructure, the soldiers have to cope with pay arrears. The accumulated arrears of the past have reached a total of 33 months<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, regular soldiers complain about a lack of trust from the general staff. The FACA is an ethnically very unbalanced army. Historically, the Yakoma tribe (4% of the CAR's population) has always been overrepresented in the Central African army. Following the rule of President Kolingba (1981-1993), a Yakoma himself, the overrepresentation has increased even more. During the presidencies of both Patassé and Bozizé, the predominance of the Yakoma has lessened because both have favoured their own ethnic group during recruitment. As a consequence, Central African presidents tend to distrust the FACA because they are for the greater part composed of soldiers suspected of affiliation to their predecessors.

The FACA, and the Central African Republic's security services in general, are in the early stages of a Security Sector Reform (SSR). France has a defence cooperation agreement with the CAR. The Central African security

<sup>17</sup> The CPR is exclusively composed of members of the Gbaya community who only seem to speak Gbaya. They are commanded by the notorious Captain Ngaïkossé and operate outside of the normal chain of command of the GP.

<sup>18</sup> Interview by IPIS in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>19</sup> Ministère de la Défense Nationale, des Anciens Combattants, des Victimes de Guerre, du Désarmement, et de la Restructuration de l'Armée, *Synthèse de l'état des lieux*. April 2008.

forces and police services each have their own French technical advisors seconded to them. The European Union is strongly involved too.

The goals of the SSR are rather ambitious and although they might be logistically feasible, the necessary funding has not yet been found. The main impact of the SSR on the FACA will be the following<sup>20</sup>:

- In 2010 one third of the current army should be renewed.
- On top of the current 5000 soldiers, 2500 additional personnel should be recruited.
- New recruitment should follow an ethnic/regional distribution code.
- Arrears need to be paid.
- The FACA have to be removed from the centre of Bangui as much as possible. They need to be posted throughout the territory. 20 army barracks have to be built in the interior and each should be manned by one company (120-150 men)<sup>21</sup>.

The FACA have a deplorable human rights record and a bad reputation. Between 2005 and 2007, the Central African security forces have built up notoriety among Central Africans for burning down entire series of villages and summarily executing civilians during 'counter-rebellion operations'. In an elaborate report of September 2007, Human Rights Watch has identified them clearly as the biggest human rights violators in the CAR<sup>22</sup>. According to the same report the worst malefactor in that period was a unit of the Presidential Guard led by Eugène Ngaïkossé, the same officer that now commands the CPR.

## Other

The principal warring parties in the CAR were discussed above. Below, some other armed groups with a significant impact on the security situation are discussed.

### FDPC

The FDPC (*Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain*, Democratic Front of the Central African People) is the third rebel movement that controls part of the CAR's territory, though only a very small area. Until 11 November 2008, it seemed that the FDPC had ceased to exist as an active



Belgian made assault rifle seized by rebels after a clash with road bandits (IPIS 2008)

## Rebels

<sup>20</sup> Interview by IPIS with EU military advisor in Bangui, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Four of such barracks already exist in Bozoum, Kaga-Bandoro, Paoua and Bria. A fifth is currently being constructed in Ndélé. Apart from the barracks in Bria, the other bases are currently occupied by MICOPAX forces.

<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Watch, *State of Anarchy. Rebellion and Abuses against Civilians*, HRW Report, September 2007, 108 p. All other international sources concur on this issue.

military movement. Before that time, it controlled a stretch of road of about 15 km between the Central African town of Kabo and the Chadian border, near the village of Nabanza where its command post is located. Its strength was estimated to be less than 20 combatants and it was believed to be badly equipped<sup>23</sup>. The small area under the control of the FDPC was located between two FACA positions, at Kabo and Sido Moyenne. Military convoys regularly had to pass through the FDPC zone. This happened without any problems. Several sources even report of logistic cooperation between the two<sup>24</sup>.

## Rebels

## Incidents

However, with the approaching of the 'inclusive political dialogue', the FDPC has known a limited revival. Its numbers have grown and it has expanded its territory<sup>25</sup>. The fighters are wearing new uniforms and they wield new Kalashnikov assault rifles<sup>26</sup>. This revival might have induced them to a reckless military operation on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, when FDPC troops attacked a FACA convoy on the Kabo-Sido road. They launched a rocket at the FACA truck and killed 9 soldiers. After the attack, the FDPC has retaken control of the entire road between Kabo and Sido.

The leader of the FDPC is a confidant of former President Patassé who goes by the name of Abdoulaye Miskine<sup>27</sup>. His real name is Martin Koumta Madji and he is rumoured to be at least half-Chadian<sup>28</sup>. Miskine currently resides in Tripoli, Libya, allegedly under the protection of President Gaddafi. It is assumed within international diplomatic circles that Libya is behind the revival of the FDPC<sup>29</sup>.

The FDPC has no clear political programme. It has an elaborate website that features articles, speeches by Miskine and even a discussion forum but it lacks a section on its mission and demands<sup>30</sup>. When Miskine, upon his return from the inclusive political dialogue in Bangui in January 2009, was asked during an interview on Alwihda TV why he had not signed the conclusions of the talks, he could only reply that first some problems needed to be solved. When he was explicitly asked by the interviewer to give an example of such a problem, he could not.

The FDPC was the first of the CAR's rebel groups to sign a ceasefire agreement with the government in December 2006 in Syrte, Libya. It has never signed any of the following peace agreements.

Relations between the FDPC and the neighbouring APRD are tense. In the past they have battled with each other, which was one of the major reasons for the near annihilation of the FDPC.

<sup>23</sup> Interviews by IPIS with military personnel in Kaga-Bandoro, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>24</sup> Interviews by IPIS in Kaga-Bandoro with humanitarian personnel active in the Kabo/Sido area, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>25</sup> It is not entirely clear where the FDPC has found its new recruits but it is likely they come from two sources. On the one hand, the FDPC might have been rejoined by several of its ex-fighters who previously had surrendered and who had been waiting in Bouar for the start of a DDR process; they deserted when that process halted and they were left to their own devices. On the other hand, the FDPC might have been reinforced by some of its ethnic kin from Southern Chad.

<sup>26</sup> Interview by IPIS with French military advisor in Bangui, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Miskine was the leader of one of the special militias used by Patassé to protect his regime. He commanded a unit of over 300 fighters, among them many Chadian mercenaries, that was posted at the northern border to fight the 'zaraguinas' (see below) and possible rebel groups. This 'Bataillon de sécurité frontalière' has been accused of grave human rights abuses.

<sup>28</sup> Confidential written UN source, May 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Interview by IPIS with French diplomat in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.centrafriquefdpc.com>

## LRA

The Lord's Resistance Army is a Ugandan rebel movement that exists since 1987 and that has been led since its creation by Joseph Kony<sup>31</sup>. The movement originates from the region of 'Acholi' in Northern Uganda. Since late 2005, it has moved its base of operations to the Garamba National Park in the *Orientale* Province of the DRC. The LRA is possibly the most infamous of all militias in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is notorious for abducting children that are being used as soldiers or sex slaves. All of the principal leaders of the LRA are under International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment<sup>32</sup>.

The total force of the LRA is estimated at 600 to 700 fighters and about the same number of dependants. The fighters are all armed with automatic weapons. The movement also disposes of several heavy machine guns and a few rocket launchers<sup>33</sup>. Throughout its existence, the LRA has received support from the Sudanese government in Khartoum<sup>34</sup>.

Until 2008, the LRA had never set foot in the Central African Republic. It had only been active in Northern Uganda, Northeastern DRC and Southern Sudan, where it had been an almost constant source of fear and terror. However, in February and March 2008, it carried out a series of raids that struck the Southeast of the CAR. Throughout the raids, 111 people have been abducted<sup>35</sup>.

It is feared that the LRA will return to the CAR in the near future because it is being pushed militarily. The 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2008, a joint military operation conducted by the UDF (Ugandan Defence Forces), the FARDC (*Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo*) and the SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army, the army of South Sudan), started in the Garamba Park. It is reasonable to assume that the rebels will flee to the CAR because security-wise it is the weakest link in the border region. The reappearance, or even settlement, of the LRA in the CAR would have grave consequences for the fragile security situation in the area.

## Coupeurs de route

The *coupeurs de route* ('road-cutters') or *zaraguinas* are bands of road bandits. During the past years, such bandits have operated all over the CAR but currently they are most active in the central parts of both the West and the East of the country. The *coupeurs* attack transports and travellers using the Central African Republic's dilapidated roads. They are not selective in choosing their targets. In the past, farmers, cattle drivers, merchants and even humanitarians have all fallen victim to attacks by *coupeurs de route*. The groups are well equipped. They are dressed in military uniforms or in black clothing (reminiscent of Japanese ninja fighters in cartoons and films) and they are all armed with assault rifles.

*Coupeurs de route* often make use of extreme violence. Not solely do they loot the convoys they attack, they sometimes kill their victims and they regularly take hostages for ransom.

<sup>31</sup> Joseph Kony is a self-declared medium and a religious fanatic. His belief is a mixture of Christianity and animism.

<sup>32</sup> The three most notorious are Joseph Kony himself, the military commander 'Major General' Okot Odhiambo and the assistant commander Lt. Colonel John Bosco Taohema.

<sup>33</sup> Confidential written MONUC source, 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Prunier G., *Killers without Borders: The LRA in the Congo*, Oxford University Press blog, January 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Written UN Source, July 2008.

## Incidents

## Bandits

The *zaraguinas* are not a new phenomenon. They have existed since decades but their composition has altered and their activity has increased. The early bandits were largely foreigners from Cameroon, Chad and even Niger who came especially to the Central African Republic to practise banditry. Today, their ranks have been joined by both foreigners and Central Africans<sup>36</sup>:

- A first group are the so-called 'occasional' bandits. They are in fact Central African soldiers (or gendarmes, policemen etc.) who use their service weapon out of working days for criminal activities. Sometimes they also lend their weapon to others.
- A second group are some of the ex-'liberators' who marched with François Bozizé to Bangui to take over power in 2003. They feel betrayed because they were promised money (500,000 CFA Franc, about €750) or positions, that they have never obtained, leaving them as unguided missiles<sup>37</sup>. Most of them are Chadians from the Zaghawa ethnicity<sup>38</sup>.
- A third group is linked to some of the bands of cattle herders that frequent the CAR for transhumance. Most of them are Chadian or Sudanese. These groups are ever more heavily armed and guarded exactly because of the danger of *coupeurs de route*. However, the armed elements of these bands – often they are mercenaries - sometimes resort to pillaging and banditry themselves<sup>39</sup>.
- A fourth group are some of the cowherds themselves. The border area between Cameroon, Chad and the Central African Republic houses a lot of impoverished Mbororo who have lost their herds and position. These men are either excluded from their own community or they serve as herdsmen in the employ of one of their richer kinsmen. To escape further marginalisation, they resort to stealing or even armed robbery<sup>40</sup>.

Some of the bandits belong to several of the categories listed above. Within foreign bands, Central Africans often serve as guides with essential knowledge on the terrain and the anticipated transports.

In 2008, the *coupeurs the route* were the biggest security problem of the CAR. In the same year, both the FACA and the APRD have launched operations against them. They are the main reason of existence for self-defence groups in some regions. Therefore they are an integral part of the Central African Republic's conflict(s).

### Self-defence groups

## Self-defence

As a result of the security problems caused by the *coupeurs de route*, several self-defence groups have been formed, especially in the Northwest of the CAR. Initially, the prime target of these groups were indeed the road bandits, and for that reason some of them joined forces with the APRD, which was also fighting them.

However, currently some of the self-defence groups above Bozoum and Bossangoa are mainly fighting the APRD. There are two obvious reasons for this development. On the one hand, the popularity of the APRD in the sub-prefectures of Paoua and Nangha Boguila is decreasing because of its

<sup>36</sup> Interviews by IPIS with humanitarian workers in Bangui and the interior, conducted in October and November 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Confidential written source, November 2008.

<sup>38</sup> Issa S., *La prise d'otages aux confins du Cameroun, de la Centrafrique et du Tchad. Une nouvelle modalité du banditisme transmigrant*, Université de Ngaoundéré, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Interview by IPIS with FNEC official in Bangui, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Issa S., *La prise d'otages aux confins du Cameroun, de la Centrafrique et du Tchad. Une nouvelle modalité du banditisme transmigrant*, Université de Ngaoundéré, 2007.

involvement in a growing number of human rights violations. On the other hand, some groups might have come under the influence of Bangui because they have received support from the presidency through the local prefects or other intermediaries<sup>41</sup>.

The armament of the self-defence groups is very limited. It consists mainly of hunting rifles. The self-defence groups have no clear structure. They have never participated in any peace process. The existence of self-defence groups (be it partially controlled by the state or not) poses a threat to the consolidation of security in the area because they can engage the APRD independently of the official peace process.

## MICOPAX

MICOPAX (*Mission de consolidation de la paix en Centrafrique*) is a multinational armed force deployed under the authority of ECCAS/CEEAC (Economic Community of Central African States, *Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale*). It replaces its predecessor, FOMUC (*Force Multinationale en Centrafrique*), which was created by the CEMAC (*Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale*). Its mandate is to consolidate peace and stability, to assist in the defence of human rights and to prepare and support the elections of 2010<sup>42</sup>.

The composition of the FOMUC/MICOPAX operation has undergone several changes. At the end of 2008, four of the ECCAS member states (Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Chad and Cameroon) provided troops for the mission. In 2009, they have been joined by Angola, that is providing a police contingent for Bangui. MICOPAX is led by the Congolese vice-admiral Hilaire Moko. The mission disposes of four operational companies and a general staff. The companies are made up of 100 soldiers of a single nationality to which a small FACA section (22 soldiers) is attached. The soldiers stay in the CAR for 6 months and they change posts every 6 weeks. MICOPAX patrols in three areas of the interior – all in the west - and Bangui. The opening of a fourth base in Ndélé, in the east, is planned for 2009<sup>43</sup>.

## International forces

Although a lot of progress was made in the course of 2008, the acceptance of MICOPAX as a peacekeeping force by both the local population and the APRD has been difficult. This is due to several reasons. MICOPAX drags behind the legacy of FOMUC, that has been present in the CAR since October 2002. FOMUC (since its inception) and also MICOPAX include a Chadian contingent. However, the Chadian army is not popular among both population and rebels, if not hated. In the past years, it has regularly crossed the border with the CAR to execute violent operations (BOX 3). Moreover, in the current security context, Chadians are often associated with problems such as armed transhumant pastoralists and *coupeurs de route*.

Also, because an integrated FACA section is attached to each MICOPAX company, the mission is perceived as biased towards the FACA, and by some even as an extension of it. Civilians, traumatised by FACA counterinsurgency operations, are often afraid of MICOPAX patrols. The relation between MICOPAX and the APRD is strained. On several occasions the APRD has prohibited MICOPAX from patrolling in their area and they even have initiated a few armed skirmishes against them<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> Interview by IPIS with presidential advisor in Bangui, conducted in November 2008

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.operationspaix.net/Micopax>

<sup>43</sup> Interview by IPIS with MICOPAX technical advisor in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Interview by IPIS with MICOPAX technical advisor in Bangui, November 2008.

## Incidents

### BOX 3: Incursions on CAR territory by the Chadian military

In January and February 2008 the Chadian army launched at least 5 consecutive attacks on Central African territory. Most of the attacks took place on the Markounda-Maitikoulou axis and north of Paoua. According to a report by Human Rights Watch the Chadian army appeared to act in cooperation with bands of Chadian transhumant pastoralists<sup>45</sup>. Reportedly, the cowherds had come into collision with local farmers over crop destruction. The most brutal operation took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of February, when the Chadians destroyed at least 6 villages, burning down hundreds of houses and killing 5 people.

It is rumoured that important military commanders of the 2<sup>nd</sup> military region in Chad have interests in cattle breeding themselves<sup>46</sup>.

## International Forces

### EUFOR

EUFOR (European Union Force) Tchad/RCA is an EU-led bridging operation paving the way for a United Nations peacekeeping force that is supposed to start on 15 March 2009. It was launched a year before in accordance with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1778. The EUFOR mission is carried out by about 3300 soldiers from 26 different countries<sup>47</sup>. The bulk of the EUFOR forces, three battalions, are deployed in Chad, where also the two headquarters are located<sup>48</sup>. A small detachment is posted in the CAR, in Birao, where the border of the CAR, Sudan and Chad meet. The garrison of the Birao base numbers a little less than 200 soldiers and for most of the time it has been exclusively French<sup>49</sup>.

The objectives of EUFOR are to protect the civilian population, facilitate humanitarian aid, improve security in the region and to protect UN facilities and personnel<sup>50</sup>.

No active interventions by the European troops have been required in the CAR so far. EUFOR has never launched an offensive military operation and neither has it been attacked. The presence of EUFOR has proven to be a stabilising factor in itself in Northeastern CAR. In theory, EUFOR has a mandate to patrol in both the Vakaga and Haute-Kotto prefectures. In practice, its radius of action is limited to the region north and northeast of Birao<sup>51</sup>.

### Foreign transhumant pastoralists

Cattle herders roughly represent 10% of the Central African Republic's population. The Central African transhumant pastoralists are Peul (Fulani) Mbororo. Generally speaking, they are becoming poorer and their herds are shrinking. Ever more of them are becoming at least partially sedentary<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Chadian Army Attacks, Burns Border Villages*, March 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Interviews by IPIS with international observers in Bangui, October 2008. IPIS did not investigate any further into the matter.

<sup>47</sup> Over half of them are French. Also Poland and Ireland provide considerable contingents.

<sup>48</sup> <http://consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1366&lang=en>

<sup>49</sup> Interview by IPIS with EUFOR Commander in Bangui, October 2008.

<sup>50</sup> <http://consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1366&lang=en>

<sup>51</sup> Interviews by IPIS with EUFOR officials in Bangui and Birao, October and November 2008.

<sup>52</sup> *The farmer and the cowman never will be friends. Agricultural conflicts in the Central African Republic*, research report commissioned by the French Embassy in Bangui, March 2004, pp. 23-25.

## Pastoralists

The Central African cowherds are not the only transhumant pastoralists trekking across the CAR territory. During almost eight months a year, the Central African Republic hosts thousands of 'foreign' cows. The large majority of these herds originate from Chad, others from Sudan, Cameroon and Niger. It is only since the 1970's that the Chadian cattle drivers have started to descend in large numbers into the CAR's territory to pasture their herds. At the same time, they have begun to wander areas all over the western part of the CAR. The massive presence of transhumant cattle herds in the Northeast is even more recent<sup>53</sup>.

There are several causes for this evolution. First and foremost, the increasing aridity in southern Chad has strongly reduced the traditional areas where transhumant groups went to bridge the dry season. Those areas are also less accessible - and this is the second reason -, because the region has become more and more unstable (and unsafe) during the past years. Thirdly, pasturing their herds in the CAR has proven to be cheap. Whereas the transhumant cowherds mostly have to pay to pasture their cattle in Chad or Sudan, in many of the secluded areas of the Northeast of the CAR they do not have to pay anybody. Finally, the Northeast is extra attractive because of the high occurrence of 'bourgou', a grass growing in wetlands that is very nutritious for cattle.

As opposed to the Central African migrating cowherds, the foreigners have much larger herds, they are better organised and often heavily armed.

The appearance of heavily armed bands of cattle herders adds another armed party to the precarious security situation in the CAR. The security problem created by the presence and passage of foreign transhumant groups has multiple aspects. One of them is banditry, because in the wake of the cattle trek the *coupeurs de route* thrive. According to some sources the *coupeurs de route* use the presence of the cattle drivers to hide themselves and infiltrate deep into the CAR<sup>54</sup>. Others claim that members of the transhumant bands commit armed robberies themselves<sup>55</sup>. Both versions do not exclude each other and it is likely that both phenomena exist.

The foreign cowherds are often not very communicative and plainly intransigent when dealing with the local population of the areas they pass<sup>56</sup>. They regularly clash with local people over issues of field destruction and animal theft<sup>57</sup>. More than once these conflicts get violent and result in several casualties. The transhumant bands feel strengthened and emboldened by their firepower. They do not hesitate to engage the Central African security forces. In 2007 and 2008 they fired on sight at an ECOFAC patrol on several occasions<sup>58</sup>.

## Incidents

### Poachers

## Resources

Poaching is a widespread phenomenon in the CAR, a country (still) richly endowed with wild fauna. Moreover, 'bush meat' is the cheapest and most available type of meat for an impoverished population. There are different types of poaching, done by different actors. Central Africans poach a lot

<sup>53</sup> *The farmer and the cowman never will be friends. Agricultural conflicts in the Central African Republic*, research report commissioned by the French Embassy in Bangui, March 2004, pp. 23-25.

<sup>54</sup> Interview by IPIS with FNEC official I in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Interview by IPIS with FNEC official II in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>56</sup> Interview by IPIS with FNEC official I in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>57</sup> *The farmer and the cowman never will be friends. Agricultural conflicts in the Central African Republic*, research report commissioned by the French Embassy in Bangui, March 2004, pp. 31-36.

<sup>58</sup> Interview by IPIS with ECOFAC official in Bangui, November 2008.

themselves. Sometimes they are even organised in small commercial networks run by local authorities<sup>59</sup>. Although the total amount of animals killed through such type of poaching might be significant, they are rather small-scale operations and pose little security problems.

## **Bandits**

More relevant to the Central African Republic's security problems is a second type of poaching, for which large bands of Sudanese are responsible. The groups number between 60 and 100 hunters when they enter Central African territory, where they split up in smaller groups. They remain in the country for several months and have fixed camps where they stay and regroup<sup>60</sup>. They operate on foot, horseback or by camel. The Sudanese poachers are heavily armed. Kalashnikov assault rifles are the lightest weapons they use for their hunting but they also have PKM machine guns and RPG rocket launchers<sup>61</sup>. Their main target is the elephant population in Eastern CAR. They kill the elephants for the ivory they sell to Chinese buyers in Sudan. Park rangers estimate they have killed up to 2000 elephants in 2007 alone.

The problem of Sudanese poachers on Central African soil is not new. It has existed for centuries. Some of them are wild men who have never known any other existence; others are slaves who are obliged to assist in the hunting.

## **FACA**

The armed bands can operate freely and almost unopposed. The wildlife areas of northeastern CAR are almost unprotected. There are some small FACA contingents in Birao, Sam-Ouandja, Ndélé and at the airfield of Awakaba but they never patrol far from their base. The same goes for the few posts of the Gendarmerie in the region. The only security force that regularly engages the poachers are the ECOFAC park rangers but they are too few to effectively guard an area of approximately 80,000 square km (or almost three times the size of Belgium). Moreover, they are often outnumbered and outgunned when they encounter large bands of heavy-armed poachers.

Although the poachers seldom attack Central African civilians and in general prefer to remain unnoticed, they constitute nevertheless a significant security hazard for the local population. Not only do the armed men pose a threat to them physically, their warlike (shooting elephants with a rocket launcher!) and large-scale hunting seriously disturbs the commercial hunting activities in the area<sup>62</sup>.

---

<sup>59</sup> Interview by IPIS with ECOFAC official in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>60</sup> Interviews by IPIS with ECOFAC officials in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Interview by IPIS with French military advisor in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Commercial hunting in the Vakaga and especially the Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture is the most important economic activity and source of income for the local population. In fact, it also generates a considerable income for the Central African Republic's Government.



Map of oil concession (IPIS 2008)

## Part 2: Presentation of the map collection

Below we discuss the different maps which are an integrated and essential part of this analysis. They can be consulted on the IPIS website:

[www.ipisresearch.be/mapping\\_car.php](http://www.ipisresearch.be/mapping_car.php)

### Cartographic sources

As for most of the African countries, there is no accurate, complete and up-to-date cartographic material on the Central African Republic as a whole. Consequently the IPIS maps have been based on several sources. An important work was done in 1996, when village locations were recorded with GPS in a systematic way (SIGCAF project). Other main cartographic sources in GIS format were kindly put at our disposal by HDPT CAR and LACCEG (University of Bangui). Very helpful were also the IGN maps *Carte de l'Afrique Centrale au 1/200 000 – République centrafricaine* (1955-1984) and *Carte touristique République centrafricaine 1 : 1 500 000* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1980).

Because of the inadequacy of the existing material, we have not been able to locate all of the villages mentioned in our sources. Moreover, sometimes no village name is known, only the approximate distance from a nearby town. We have positioned information relating to such places in a place nearby.

### The basic map 'Central African Republic'

#### CAR

The Central African Republic map is the necessary background on which our security information is projected. It contains basic geographical information such as the boundaries of prefectures and sub-prefectures, villages and

towns, roads, rivers and streams, lakes, protected areas, airstrips, and vegetation. Sources are SIGCAF, HDPT CAR, LACCEG and CARPE.

## The 'dynamic' maps

### Rebels Self-defence Bandits FACA International forces

The dynamic maps visualise the presence of armed groups in the region (including the regular army). Because combatants move, the information given is only valid for a limited period of time. In this case, it relates to the situation in November 2008. We have drawn 5 dynamic maps showing the positions of the different armed groups that have been involved in violent conflict: rebel groups (APRD, UFDR, FDPC), self-defence groups, bandits (*coupeurs de route* and poachers), FACA and international military missions. The maps contain basic information on the strength and the commanders of the units (if applicable and known), as well as the exact location where they are based. The layers are based on input from international military observers, complemented and corrected with information from people working in the field. The input was collected by IPIS researchers in interviews throughout the country.

### Pastoralists

A sixth map gives an indication of the routes used by Central African and foreign transhumant pastoralists, they too are often involved in conflict situations.

### Conflict actors

A seventh map combines the positions of all the above parties. We have named it 'Conflict actors'.

### Incidents

The last dynamic map, 'Incidents', is a bit different. Instead of positions of conflict parties, it shows human rights abuses in which combatants have been involved, and confrontations between two (or more) groups. The human rights violations are represented on the maps with different symbols according to the perpetrator. For each event additional information is given on the exact date, place and the parties involved.

The incident layer serves a double purpose. On the one hand, it shows where armed elements have been active, on the other hand, it gives us the opportunity to examine some specific events that may give an indication of the motivation of the combatants involved. The events included in the incident layer are based on data from several UN organisations and the available reports on human rights violations and confrontations in the region. For each incident, the source is mentioned.

## The 'static' maps

The static maps represent our geographical transcription of military motives in the conflict environment of the Central African Republic. These motivating factors are less subject to change. Many military motivations can even be translated into permanent geographic features. We distinguish between four types of war motivations. For each of these we have created specific maps.

A first war motivation is greed. A greed map should give an overview of all the places in the CAR where armed men can make a profit. We have created two such layers.

### Resources

The 'natural resources' map represents the mineral and natural wealth in

the country. It combines data from LACCEG, DPER (Ministry of Mines), HDPT CAR, JRC, DIADATA, IPIS and PARPAF.

A second greed map is the 'trade routes'. It explains how minerals, agricultural products and cattle are transported from the production centres to the markets, cities and border crossings. These routes are of economic importance because whoever controls them can levy taxes or simply rob people. The data on the trade routes has been gathered through interviews with local people and taken from existing reports on trade.

## **Trade routes**

A second war motivation IPIS distinguishes is grievance. Grievance is a motive that is generally attributed to those who fight the state. Our grievance maps of the CAR should represent the problems and needs of the 'rebel groups' APRD and UFDR (we were not able to draft a credible list of FDPC grievances). The translation of grievance motives in geography is a challenging conceptual exercise. Following the guidelines of our handbook 'Mapping Conflict Motives in War Areas'<sup>63</sup>, we have tried to answer the questions: Which injustices do they denounce? What are their needs? And what do they want to achieve?

## **Socio-economic**

The APRD and UFDR denounce more or less the same two situations, namely the neglect of their regions by the central government and the persisting insecurity. Whether the rebel groups are most active in areas of insecurity and whether they take action to fight it, we could verify on our incidents map. Also the grievances about the neglect of their home region can be verified geographically. On a 'socio-economic' map we have indicated poverty rates, education (school attendance rates, illiteracy), health centres and posts (data from LACCEG). These maps allow us to check if the rebels are indeed active in areas that lag socio-economically behind the rest of the country.

## **Ethnic**

A much discussed type of grievance-motivated wars are ethnic conflicts. To include the factor of ethnicity in our research, we have made an 'ethnic map' that shows the most important ethnic groups in the country. It is based on data from LACCEG and HDPT. The location of the groups is approximate and the map does not allow to show that different peoples live together in the same area. However, it remains a useful element to show major concentrations and fault lines<sup>64</sup>.

## **Strategic**

A third important motivation that may drive warring parties is power. A power map shows those areas where power can be gained or lost. In the CAR power centres are situated in the prefecture capitals, sub-prefecture capitals and in the bigger towns. These places are indicated on all our maps. A separate map layer will also be added to show the most important military power centres in the region. The 'strategic' map highlights those geographic features that possess a certain power potential. The map was produced with the help of international military observers in the CAR.

## **Hideout**

A fourth and last motivation examined in this report is security/survival. A survival map should represent all geographic features that contribute to the fulfilment of the basic physiological needs of human beings, as well as those areas where they can hide when their physical security is under threat. We have added the latter areas on a 'hideout map'. This map marks the most

<sup>63</sup> [http://www.ipisresearch.be/maps/Handbook\\_Aug2008.pdf](http://www.ipisresearch.be/maps/Handbook_Aug2008.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> Should any conflict party systematically target a specific ethnic group, it would show on the superposition of our incidents and ethnic maps.

important jungle and mountain areas, because this is where combatants seeking refuge are likely to move to. We have also added a buffer zone of 20 km around every prefecture capital and 10 km around every major road, because we can assume these areas are regularly patrolled by the FACA or the police. This is a general criterion postulated by IPIS, which does not take into account the specificity of certain situations and is open to refinement and discussion.

Unfortunately, IPIS is currently unable to provide a 'food security' layer showing geographic features that contribute to the fulfilment of the basic physiological needs of human beings. An appropriate source is not immediately available. On the other hand, the layer would not add many new elements to the analysis. The CAR is thinly populated while water and arable land are everything but rare. Moreover, there are few indications that conflicts in the CAR are about food security<sup>65</sup>.

## The report map

### Report

The report map functions as the cartographic version of a column 'further reading/ further reference'. It comprises a single layer displaying a number of hyperlinks. The links are connected to specific places and redirect the user to reports, analyses, articles and other written material on that particular area. Hyperlinks to documents on security-related issues in the CAR as a whole were attached to the capital Bangui.

---

<sup>65</sup> An important exception is the conflict between cowherds and farmers but this issue can be analysed by making use of some of the other maps (transhumant pastoralists and incidents).

## Part 3: Analysis



Watchtower at Eufor base in Birao (IPIS 2008)

### The East

#### CAR

The East is by far the biggest of the three conflict regions but also the least populated. Among the eastern prefectures Vakaga, Haute-Kotto, Haut-Mbomou, Bamingui-Bangoran and Mbomou, the first three are the most relevant to our analysis. Vakaga is the prefecture that in recent years has seen the most warfare in the region. It borders both Chad and Sudan and has clearly felt the impact of the conflict between its two neighbours. The UFDR has positions in both the Vakaga and Haute-Kotto prefectures. The Northeast of the CAR is very different from the rest of the country. The large majority of its population is Muslim and people speak Arabic rather than French or Sango, the CAR's national language.

#### Rebels

#### Socio-economic

Haut-Mbomou borders both Sudan and the DRC. It is the area that was attacked by the LRA in early 2008. Until recently, there was no international humanitarian presence in the prefecture. Bearing in mind the nearly complete absence of the Central African state in the east, it is probably the most slighted area in the region and almost a blind spot.

#### Presence of UFDR

#### Rebels

The UFDR has positions in the southern part of the Vakaga prefecture and the northern part of Haute-Kotto. It operates several checkpoints on the few (and most of the time nearly impassable) roads in the area, where they demand taxes. It also controls several town centres. Apart from the town of Sam-Ouandja, where they cooperate, the UFDR and the FACA are not present in the same areas of the region. For more than 18 months, the UFDR has been militarily well-nigh inactive. Many of its fighters have become dormant. They have taken up artisanal diamond mining and farming again but they can be called up when the need arises. In Sam-Ouandja, for example, the presence of only 35 UFDR combatants is recognised officially by Bangui, so they are the only ones that receive a monthly pay<sup>66</sup>. However,

#### FACA

<sup>66</sup> Interview by IPIS with UFDR commander in Sam-Ouandja, November 2008.

many more UFDR members are living in the area.

The deployment of the UFDR combatants might change in the near future because in order to demobilise and integrate into the FACA they need to regroup at their base in Tiringoulou.

### **Motives of UFDR**

#### **CAR**

General Damane and his men only control a limited part of the CAR as to surface area but even more so in terms of population. Their zone does not include a capital of a prefecture and only a single capital of a sub-prefecture (Ouadda). Since they have signed a ceasefire with the Central African government, they have never attempted to extend their military control over a larger area. It seems that, to them, increasing their power is not a priority.

#### **Incidents**

According to their own spokesman they are interested in participating in government but it seems that this originates from a wish of representation rather than from the lust for power. The UFDR's claim that it denounces the marginalisation of its home region is credible when compared to its behaviour in the field. Militarily it has become a passive force that has proven to be a reliable party throughout the peace process and that is operating in a region that scores extremely low on basic infrastructure.

#### **Socio-economic**

#### **Ethnic**

Two comments need to be made though. On the one hand, the UFDR is seriously ethnically biased. Currently, the group consists almost exclusively of combatants from the Gula ethnicity, which is the most numerous group in the region. The relationship with the other communities is strained and ethnically motivated violent incidents between Gula and Runga (the second most numerous group) have been reported on several occasions. UFDR elements have been involved in several of those incidents, especially in the towns of Sam-Ouandja and Ouadda where they are known to harass and often rob the non-Gula population in particular.

#### **Incidents**

#### **Resources**

On the other hand, although unlikely, possible greed motivations behind the UFDR behaviour should not be excluded. The UFDR area borders the most important diamond region in eastern CAR and many of the UFDR combatants work at the diamond sites, most of them as simple workers, some running their own site as *chef de chantier* or *exploitant*<sup>67</sup>. However, the income generated in Sam-Ouandja and the surrounding area through diamond mining is low<sup>68</sup>. Besides, many of the UFDR soldiers already worked in the diamond mines before their enrolment in the movement<sup>69</sup>. The very limited impact of natural resources on the conflict dynamics is a recurrent phenomenon throughout the CAR (BOX 4).

#### **BOX 4: Natural resources and conflict in the CAR**

The Central African Republic is endowed with a wide range of resources. The ones that are currently being exploited in considerable quantities are timber, diamonds, gold and ivory<sup>70</sup>. It is striking to note that most of the territories held by rebels contain only few natural resources.

<sup>67</sup> Interviews by IPIS with diamond miners and traders in Sam-Ouandja, November 2008.

<sup>68</sup> Interviews by IPIS with diamond traders in Bangui and Sam-Ouandja, November 2008.

<sup>69</sup> Interview by IPIS with UFDR negotiator and spokesman Djarnib Grebaye in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>70</sup> There are also known important - but so far unexploited - deposits of uranium, iron, copper and probably oil, besides occurrences of zinc, tin, nickel, coltan, cobalt, etc.

Timber and rough diamond are the country's leading export products.

The timber industry is located in the southwest, which is probably the calmest region in the country. The eight forest concession holders can operate without significant security problems<sup>71</sup>. In general, the forestry sector in the CAR has a good reputation<sup>72</sup>. A notable blemish on this reputation is the exceptional logging permit granted to the company SEBOCA for a concession outside the forestry area<sup>73</sup>.

The major diamond producing regions are located in the southwest and centre-east of the country. All deposits are alluvial. Almost the entire production is artisanal, employing 50,000 to 80,000 diamond diggers (*creuseurs*) and providing a living for about 600,000 people in the mining areas (on a total population of 4,2 million). The CAR is a mid-size diamond exporter, with an export, in 2007, of 418,000 carats for a value of nearly 60 million USD, which makes it the 8<sup>th</sup> diamond producer in Africa. In terms of quality, the country ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in the world, the vast proportion (75 to 80%) of its diamonds being of gem quality. The CAR is a member of the Kimberley Process since 2003 and in 2008 it joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). Its diamond economy is relatively well-regulated and transparent. Production and trade of diamond and gold are overseen by the *Bureau d'Evaluation et de Contrôle de Diamants et Or* (BECDOR). Nonetheless, smuggling exists: BECDOR itself estimates fraudulent exports of diamonds at 20 to 25%<sup>74</sup>. It is interesting to note that in October 2008 the official exports dropped dramatically by more than 50%, due to government closure of 8 out of the 10 *bureaux d'achat* (the diamond-trading and exporting companies) through the strict enforcement of some articles of the Mining Law. Moreover, many *bureaux* and middlemen (*collecteurs*) have had their diamonds confiscated<sup>75</sup>.

Diamond exploitation is also affected by the insecurity, mainly caused by *coupeurs de route*. Some companies employ private security services, gendarmes or even Presidential Guards to protect their sites, and nearly all transport is done by plane<sup>76</sup>. In the Northeast of the country, all the *bureaux d'achat* left the mining town of Sam-Ouandja after the UFDR attack in November 2006 and never returned. Mining activity decreased and since then diamonds have to be transported by motorcycle to Bria, a nonstop ride of 48 hours in the rainy season on difficult and dangerous roads<sup>77</sup>.

Gold is often found in the same areas as diamonds, mostly in alluvial deposits but also in rocks. The main production areas are

<sup>71</sup> Interview by IPIS with manager of timber company in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>72</sup> Auzel P. & Schmitt A., *Mission de faisabilité - République Centrafricaine*, Forests Monitor publication, January 2008.

<sup>73</sup> Interview by IPIS with a technical advisor for the timber industry in Bangui, November 2008. The concession is located in the Nana-Mambéré prefecture near Bouar. It is an area of 'gallery forests' (forest along a river). The permit was granted under the pressure of an incumbent minister.

<sup>74</sup> Interviews by IPIS with BECDOR official in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>75</sup> Interviews by IPIS with diamond trader and with BECDOR official in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>76</sup> Interview by IPIS with diamond trader in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>77</sup> Interviews by IPIS with diamond traders in Bangui and in Sam-Ouandja, November 2008.

the southwest and the Ouaka prefecture (Bambari). Gold, like diamonds, is currently only mined artisanally.

It is very difficult to get a clear idea of the CAR's gold production. The official export figures of the last years fluctuate from 14,5 kg in 2005 over 10,3 in 2006 to 20,3 in 2007. In the first half of 2008 alone we have 33,6 kg, while no export at all is recorded for July, August, September and October. The problem is that there is practically no control on the exploitation, trade and export of gold. Some estimates are that the actual production is around 2 tons a year<sup>78</sup>.

Several foreign mining companies have been exploring for gold in the CAR (as for diamonds). The most important project is that of Aurafrique, a subsidiary of Canada's Axmin, near Bambari. The company expects it will provide 6,2 tons per year for 7 years. The industrial exploitation is due to start in 2010/2011.

The sole CAR resource that does seem to attract violence is its fauna. Illegal poaching by heavily armed groups is rife in the Vakaga and Bamingui-Bangoran prefectures. The poachers are mostly interested in ivory and so they principally hunt for elephants. It is estimated that in 2007 around 2000 elephants in the CAR were killed<sup>79</sup>. Apart from the elephant tusks, the poachers show more and more interest in other 'products' too, such as bush meat, hippo teeth and recently even honey. Almost anything can be a resource, as is illustrated by the large-scale bamboo trafficking in Vakaga (see below). The fauna in the CAR is under severe pressure. The density of almost all wild animals in the Northeast has strongly decreased over the past 20 years<sup>80</sup>.

It is, however, not excluded that resources have been a conflict issue in the past or might become one in the future.

It is, for example, the firm belief of ex-president Patassé that Chad supported the coup against his regime, because it wanted to prevent him from starting to drill for oil in the North of the CAR<sup>81</sup>. There are indeed indications of possible petroleum reserves in the North of the CAR and it is true that the last 5 years the search for the 'black gold' has come to a standstill<sup>82</sup>, but all the rest is speculation.

A future security hazard linked to natural resources might be the exploitation of uranium in the South of the CAR. In the second half of 2008, Areva, the French multinational that runs a uranium project in Bakouma, has recruited a protection coordinator to try to prevent the site from becoming the target of an armed group<sup>83</sup>. Bakouma lies in the Mbomou prefecture, that borders the Haute-Kotto

<sup>78</sup> MBendi Information Services, Central African Republic - Mining: Gold Mining, <http://www.mbendi.com>, last visited on 16 February 2009.

<sup>79</sup> Interview by IPIS with ECOFAC official in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>80</sup> Renaud P.-C., *Recensement aérien de la faune dans les préfctures de la région Nord de la République Centrafricaine*, 2005.

<sup>81</sup> Interview by IPIS with journalist in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>82</sup> Confidential file of several written sources. IPIS did not investigate the issue any further since it is unrelated to the current conflict situation.

<sup>83</sup> Interview by IPIS with AREVA official in Bangui, November 2008. Probably AREVA is trying to avoid running into the same problems it experienced with its concession in Niger.

prefecture where the UFDR has several positions. Large-scale construction at the site will not start before 2010 and exploitation of uranium not before 2014, but should the project continue, it will bring about a quasi-revolution in terms of infrastructure and opening up of the country.

### **Presence of FACA**

## **FACA**

The FACA presence in the region is very limited. The small contingents in Birao, Sam-Ouandja, Ndélé, and Obo are absolutely insufficient to monitor the borders with Chad, Sudan and the DRC.

With the offensive against the LRA in the Garamba Park in the DRC, the general staff of the CAR has declared it will send additional troops to the Obo area<sup>84</sup>.

### **Motives of FACA**

## **Incidents**

The FACA deployment in the region is too limited to have any significant impact on the security situation. Its largest contingent (1 company) is based in Birao. The situation in Birao is calm and stable but this is rather due to the presence of EUFOR than to the FACA. It cannot be said that the FACA in the East are performing their task (protecting the CAR's territory and its people) but it cannot be said that they are doing the contrary either. There are a few recent reports of FACA abuses against the local population<sup>85</sup>.

### **Presence and motives of international troops**

## **Missions**

A company of ECCAS soldiers will be based at Ndélé in the course of 2009 but in 2008 no MICOPAX contingent was positioned in the East. Currently, the only international troop presence are the two EUFOR companies in Birao.

The shortcomings of the FACA deployment also apply to EUFOR. There are simply not enough troops to "protect the civilian population, facilitate humanitarian aid and improve security" in the Vakaga and Haute-Kotto prefectures. EUFOR might be able to discourage a new armed insurgency against the regime in Bangui, but it cannot solve the insecurity problems caused by the roaming bandits in the region<sup>86</sup>.

### **Presence and motives of LRA**

## **Incidents**

The LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) has carried out a series of operations on CAR's soil during three weeks in February-March 2008. They attacked a series of villages in the southeastern corner of the CAR in the Haut-Mbomou prefecture (BOX 5).

## **Resources**

The attacks of the LRA in the Central African Republic can be best described as raids. The LRA has never proclaimed any political agenda with regard to the CAR and it is very unlikely it has one. The area has no particular wealth of natural resources or properties. On the contrary, it is probably one of the

<sup>84</sup> Reuters, *Central African Republic prepares to resist LRA rebels*, 12 January 2009.

<sup>85</sup> In Birao, a new commander of the military region arrived at the beginning of October 2008 and seems capable of keeping his men in line. In Obo, a similar pattern could be observed: a number of abuses in the past, but much less currently.

<sup>86</sup> It is common knowledge that one of the principal reasons of existence of the EUFOR detachment in Birao, is to prevent Chadian rebels based in Sudan from crossing into Chad by making a detour across CAR territory. This is of course a motivation with only little relevance to the security situation in the CAR itself.

poorest regions of one of the poorest countries in the world.

The decision taken by the LRA is probably strategic. It carried out similar attacks in South Sudan right before and after its raid in the CAR. On the one hand, the LRA probably set out on a mission to the CAR and South Sudan to supply itself with goods (through looting) and recruits (through abductions). On the other hand, it is possible that the LRA came to the region on a reconnaissance mission, seeking to identify areas to establish a new base, should the need arise.

## Hideout

If the LRA has any real motive for its attacks on the CAR, it can only be the survival of the movement itself. Because of the latest operations against its primary base in the DRC, the LRA's survival is under heightened pressure. Therefore an LRA return to the CAR in 2009 should not be excluded and it will most probably be driven by survival motivations.

## Incidents

### **BOX 5: The LRA operations in the CAR**

The LRA probably entered the CAR for the first time on 16 February 2008<sup>87</sup>. The following series of attacks ensued:

A first attack occurred on 19 February in Bambouti, where 13 people were abducted.

A second was directed against Bassigbiri. On 25 February 14 people were abducted there.

The biggest operation took place in Obo on 6 March, where the LRA kidnapped 79 people.

Finally, 5 people were abducted in Ligoua on 8 March.

The abductees were tied up and beaten. They served as porters on their way back to the LRA base camp in the DRC, where they would serve as workers and soldiers. The women and girls were to be used as sex slaves too.

In each instance the LRA also looted the villages. It stole food, clothing and utensils. On two occasions it also looted a health post<sup>88</sup>.

The LRA abducted a lot of children. Of the 111 CAR hostages, 34 were released and 4 managed to escape themselves. Among the 34 people that were released there was not a single minor<sup>89</sup>.

Initially, there was some reservation in attributing the attacks described above to the LRA. However, additional evidence from eyewitness accounts by escapees and an LRA defector in the course of April and May 2008 has removed all doubt<sup>90</sup>.

### **Presence and motives of poachers**

## Bandits

Each year, poachers from Sudan penetrate the park and hunting areas of the

<sup>87</sup> Confidential written MONUC source, 2008.

<sup>88</sup> BONUCA, *Abductions, lootings, rapes and unlawful use of child soldiers following armed attacks against civilians in the Southeastern Central African Republic*, Field assessment report, March 2008.

<sup>89</sup> OCHA, *Rapport mission inter agences et multisectorielle dans le Haut Mbomou (Obo et Bambouti) du 2 au 9 juillet 2008*.

<sup>90</sup> Confidential written MONUC sources, April and May 2008.

Vakaga and Bamingui-Bangoran prefectures. They always enter the CAR's territory via the same tracks and they have several fixed sites to assemble and set up camp<sup>91</sup>. However, during the longest part of their stay in the CAR, their positions depend on the wild animals (mostly elephants) they are tracking. These poachers are a textbook example of an armed group that has a sole purpose of existence: plunder and profit. They thrive in the virtual absence of the Central African state, and the more disorganisation in the country the better they can continue their trafficking.

### **Presence and motives of transhumant pastoralists**

#### **Pastoralists**

The North and East of Vakaga is popular among bands of drovers originating from Sudan. Chadian cattle drivers go to northern Bamingui-Bangoran and Vakaga.

#### **CAR**

The large majority of these transhumant bands do not come to the region to trade, they come down to pasture their herds. It is a foreign presence, parasitic and potentially violent, because the bands are accompanied by heavily armed guards who often shoot before asking questions. Moreover, the presence of the transhumant bands is mostly illegal, because large parts of eastern CAR have been officially designated as hunting grounds<sup>92</sup>, areas in which according to law no transhumance activity can take place for ecological reasons<sup>93</sup>.

#### **Incidents**

Clashes between these groups and the local population are frequent. Two 'high-profile' cases of such confrontations, resulting in casualties, have led to serious tensions that were (later) resolved by an agreement on the payment of compensation<sup>94</sup>. However, inhabitants of the region feel that they have ended up in an endless spiral of mutual vengeance<sup>95</sup>.

### **Presence and motives of *coupeurs de route***

#### **Bandits**

The road bandits in the Northeast can operate as freely as the poachers. Less traffic passes through the region, though, and during the rainy season no traffic at all. It would seem that the *coupeurs de route* in the East are even more merciless than their counterparts in the West. On several occasions they have attacked humanitarian convoys. In March 2008 they even fired at a medical transport, killing the patient.

#### **Incidents**

It is assumed that among the roaming poachers, road bandits and escorts of the cowherds, there are men who combine two or all three of the 'trades'.

#### **BOX 6: Bamboo trafficking**

Besides poachers and cowherds, there is another group of armed Sudanese active on the CAR's soil. This group is probably better equipped than any other armed group excluding EUFOR. It operates both north and south of Am-Dafock, near the Sudanese border, and it is involved in large-scale bamboo cutting.

<sup>91</sup> Interviews by IPIS with ECOFAC officials in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>92</sup> There are two types of official hunting grounds: *Zones Cynégétiques Villageoises* (ZCV), 'Village Hunting Zones', belonging to the local communities and supervised by ECOFAC, and *Secteurs de chasse*, 'Hunting Sectors', leased every year by the state to private operators.

<sup>93</sup> The transhumant bands of pastoralists create enormous ecological problems. The Gata lake near Gordil, for example, until a few years ago famous for its mass presence of hippos, is virtually empty now. It has been contaminated by an enormous amount of cow urine.

<sup>94</sup> In 2002, a Central African Islamic religious authority was killed by Sudanese cowherds. In March 2008, ECOFAC officials killed a member of a transhumant band.

<sup>95</sup> Interviews by IPIS in Birao, November 2008.

Organised bands arrive in the region with four-wheel drives and trucks. They are heavily armed and do not tolerate priers. The trucks bring teams of cutters with them. They leave the workers at the cutting site to pick them up afterwards, together with the bamboo. Sometimes, the harvest of a local (Central African) cutter is taken by force and loaded onto the trucks. Local sources indicate that as much as 50 trucks loaded with bamboo cross the Sudanese border each week<sup>96</sup>.

‘Chinese bamboo’ is a popular construction material in Sudan where it is used to build walls, roofs and furniture. There it costs about 1 € for a stem of 5-6 meters, which is much more than in Birao<sup>97</sup>.

It is believed that the bamboo traffickers act in complicity with the Sudanese army<sup>98</sup>.

The FACA are aware of the problem but believe they do not have the means to stop the traffic.



Colonel 'Laurent' of the APRD and an advisor (IPIS 2008)

## The Northwest

### CAR

The Northwest of the CAR has been the last of the three major rebel zones to stabilise, though it is still rather turbulent. It is the home region of both the former and the incumbent president but the two belong to a different ethnic group, Sara and Gbaya respectively. A front line dividing the supporters and/or ethnic group of both leaders runs through this region. It is also the most densely populated of the rebel-held areas.

<sup>96</sup> Interview by IPIS with inhabitant of Am-Dafock in Birao, November 2008.

<sup>97</sup> The irony of it all is that Central Africans who want to buy their own bamboo across the border in Sudanese Am Dafock pay even more, because they need to pay taxes to 'reimport' the bamboo into their own country.

<sup>98</sup> Interview by IPIS with FACA commander in Birao, November 2008.

## Presence of APRD

### Rebel

The APRD in the Northwest holds positions in 4 sub-prefectures: Ngaoundaye, Paoua, Markounda and Nangha Boguila. Its 'core region' is the sub-prefecture of Paoua, which, apart from the town centre of Paoua itself, is completely under its rule. The rebels control most of the road axes<sup>99</sup>. They generally avoid the larger town centres and dwell in small villages or the bush. They have installed parallel administrative and judicial systems and they have replaced or appointed several of the local officials<sup>100</sup>.

### Incidents

The APRD rebels in northwestern CAR are often a burden to the local population. They tax civilians on a number of activities and they impose considerable fines. One of the most notorious practices in rebel-held territory are the summary executions of people suspected of sorcery. Some believe that the APRD sometimes uses such 'justice' to settle personal scores, but people being accused of sorcery is a widespread phenomenon all over the country. Other violations of human rights include pillaging and kidnapping. The biggest victim of the APRD is the Peul population in the area. The APRD regards them all as *coupeurs de route*. Most of the sedentary Peul living in the rebel zone have fled to Chad and Cameroon. The remaining few have gathered on the outskirts of Paoua. Besides the overt discrimination and the abuses against the Peul, the APRD does not seem to wage an ethnic war. As opposed to the UFDR, the APRD does not specifically defend the interests of a single ethnic group at the cost of the other groups in the region. It does occupy, however, the areas traditionally inhabited by the Sara. It is not a coincidence that this is the ethnic group to which ex-president Patassé belongs.

### Ethnic

### Incidents

Colonel Laurent and his troops have clashed with the FACA on several occasions in the course of 2008. In the same period, APRD combatants have opened fire on MICOPAX convoys more than once. On the axis Paoua-Bozoum there have also been confrontations with self-defence groups.

## Motives of APRD

The northwestern APRD is the most active of the CAR's rebel groups. As opposed to the UFDR, the signing of a peace agreement did not prevent them from remaining militarily active.

### Resources

The APRD of Colonel Laurent is poor and it does not seem that warfare is making it much richer. Compared to the rest of the Central African territory, the area under its control is poorly endowed with natural resources and so are the neighbouring areas.

If the APRD really wants to protect the civilian population, restore the economy and bring about a regime change, it seems to put little effort in the first two points. The rebels have become a menace themselves to the local population and their parasitic behaviour towards all commercial activity in the area is not conducive to economic recovery. It is difficult to see a clear line in the behaviour of the northwestern APRD. On the one hand, it seeks power. Its tenacity in the field and the recurrent small attacks against the FACA (despite the ongoing peace process) are indications of its continuing opposition against the Bozizé presidency<sup>101</sup>.

<sup>99</sup> An important exception is the southern half of the axis Paoua-Bozoum.

<sup>100</sup> Interviews by IPIS with local and international sources in Paoua, conducted in November 2008.

<sup>101</sup> Colonel Laurent, stressing the importance of a regime change, has stated that, if needed, the APRD will march on Bangui.

On the other hand, it is clear that the APRD in the field is looking for a way out. There have been no major APRD offensives in the past year despite the unlikelihood of a major regime change. A second point in case is the issue of amnesty, which has caused a big setback in the Libreville peace process (BOX 7). In that respect, the APRD is continuing its fight to assure its own survival (and the survival of its chairman).

### **BOX 7: Amnesty and the ICC in the CAR**

In August 2008, the APRD quit the Libreville peace process because of an amnesty bill that was being prepared in the Central African parliament. Amnesty would only be given for crimes committed in 2002 and later. However, Jean-Jacques Demafouth, chairman of the APRD, had already got himself talked about for crimes committed before that time<sup>102</sup>.

The bill was revised and finally promulgated on 13 October. The amnesty period was extended and Demafouth was one of the people explicitly mentioned as free from prosecution<sup>103</sup>. The law continued to have some flaws but nonetheless the APRD re-entered the peace process without lingering.

War crimes in the CAR are also being investigated at international level. Currently (February 2009), the ICC is trying former Congolese rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba for crimes against humanity committed by his troops in the CAR in 2002 and 2003. Bemba and his troops were called upon twice by the former Central African president Patassé to stop a coup d'état attempt by his opponents.

The ICC came to the CAR at the invitation of the Bozizé regime itself to investigate these crimes. Several Central African former highly-placed persons fear that the ICC will catch sight of them too. Among the most cited names are former president Ange-Félix Patassé, former Minister of Defence Jean-Jacques Demafouth (the current leader of the APRD) and former 'military aide' to the president Abdoulaye Miskine<sup>104</sup> (the current leader of the FDPC).

A significant detail of the ICC's CAR dossier is that the international prosecutor has stated that the ICC reserves the right to investigate other crimes, beyond the 2002-2003 period<sup>105</sup>. Because of this, the incumbent president – who invited the ICC in the first place – runs the risk of one day having to account for the grave human rights violations committed by his presidential guard in 2006-2007 in the North and East of the country. President Bozizé apparently fears such a scenario since he has asked the UN Security Council to suspend the ICC proceedings<sup>106</sup>.

However, in the short run, there are no indications that any of the above-mentioned persons will be indicted soon.

<sup>102</sup> In particular the 'Kembé case' of October 1999 involving the murder of several supporters of ex-president Kolingba.

<sup>103</sup> International Crisis Group, République centrafricaine: débloquent le dialogue politique inclusif, Crisis Group Africa Briefing, December 2008.

<sup>104</sup> Who, reportedly, was also Patassé's personal 'marabout'.

<sup>105</sup> Interview by IPIS with ICC official in Bangui, October 2008.

<sup>106</sup> International Crisis Group, République centrafricaine: débloquent le dialogue politique inclusif, Crisis Group Africa Briefing, December 2008.

## **Presence of FACA**

### **FACA**

The FACA has several smaller positions in the north of the region but the majority of their forces are based south of the rebel-held areas. The Northwest holds the biggest concentration of governmental forces outside Bangui but their numbers are still very small. Besides the regular FACA bases and posts, Presidential Guard soldiers are deployed in the home town of the president's family and serve as guards in several prisons.

## **Motives of FACA**

The soldiers guarding the prisons of Bossangoa and Bossembélé are members of the Territorial Battalion of the Presidential Guard. Central African prisons in general, and those two in particular, are notorious for the maltreatment of prisoners<sup>107</sup>.

### **Incidents**

The FACA field units are deployed to contain the APRD and to tackle the problem of road banditry in the region. The FACA carried out a few successful operations against the *coupeurs de route* in 2008, for example in Bilakare. Although such operations contribute to the integrity of the Central African territory and the security of its population, the FACA continue to figure as one of the major human rights violators in the region<sup>108</sup>. Most striking and ever-recurrent are cases of severe torturing in prisons and the summary execution of civilians suspected of rebel or bandit activity.

The combination of both aspects of FACA behaviour indicate that the Central African army is rather occupied with protecting the power in Bangui (and a specific group of the population) rather than protecting the people and their territory as a whole.

## **Presence and motives of self-defence groups**

### **Self-defence**

Self-defence groups figure in several areas of the Northwest, nearly wherever *coupeurs de route* have been active.

To our knowledge there are no reports of abuses against the local population by self-defence groups. Their attacks have targeted both the road bandits and more recently also the APRD. Taking into account that the APRD in the Paoua area has become a burden to the civilian population, this comes as no surprise. However, it remains to be seen whether the self-defence groups will not start to pose security problems themselves now that they are legitimised by the CAR's authorities.

## **Presence and motives of international troops**

### **Missions**

Two MICOPAX companies are deployed in the Northwest, one in Bozoum and one in Paoua. In the near future, the company stationed in Bozoum will be transferred to Ndélé in the East. The usefulness of the Bozoum company can indeed be questioned. It might have been positioned there to deter actions by road bandits but it is not clear if its presence alone is sufficient to solve this problem.

In Paoua, MICOPAX has to make sure that both the FACA and the APRD remain in their current (post-May 2008) positions. The 122 men strong force has not been able to prevent a series of confrontations between the warring

<sup>107</sup> Interview by IPIS with UN human rights officer in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>108</sup> BONUSCA Section Droits de l'Homme, Rapport public de janvier à avril 2008.

parties during the second half of 2008.

## **Incidents**

It has to be noted that, throughout 2008, the MICOPAX soldiers have not figured as perpetrators in any major human rights or security incident<sup>109</sup>.

### **Presence and motives of *coupeurs de route***

## **Bandits Incidents**

In 2008, the *coupeurs de route* in the Northwest of the CAR have been mostly active south of the rebel-held territory. It is striking to see that during most of their attacks hostages were taken and a ransom was demanded. As with the poachers, the bandits benefit from a continued situation of state absence and relative anarchy. There can be little other motivation for their actions than seeking profit.

### **Presence and motives of transhumant pastoralists**

The cowherds in the Northwest of the CAR are mostly Central Africans. The distances they travel with their herds are much smaller than their counterparts in the North and East of the country. Several of them sell their cattle in Cameroon<sup>110</sup>.

The relationship between the Peul Mbororo and the APRD of Colonel Laurent has degenerated completely. Most of the Central African Mbororo have fled to Cameroon and Chad. The remaining few have regrouped and retreated to an outlying part of Paoua. The Mbororo claim that virtually all of their cattle has been stolen by the APRD and that they can hardly circulate because their lives are under constant threat<sup>111</sup>.

## **Pastoralists**

Besides these 'native' Mbororo, the area is also frequented by some large and heavily armed transhumant bands originating from Chad. Some of these groups come to sell their animals at the market in Bangui. However, since beef is rather expensive for the average Central African, who prefers to eat the cheaper 'bush meat', demand in the CAR is rather low. Therefore, most of those herds come to the CAR with the sole purpose of pasturing. Their journey south sometimes takes them as far as Boda and Berbérati, but they do not enter the forest<sup>112</sup>.

---

<sup>109</sup> This has been different in the past. In 2007, for example, the Chadian contingent was notorious for firing blindly in the bush along the roads it patrolled, a behaviour denounced by the humanitarian organisations working in the region.

<sup>110</sup> *The farmer and the cowman never will be friends. Agricultural conflicts in the Central African Republic*, research report commissioned by the French Embassy in Bangui, March 2004, pp. 20-26.

<sup>111</sup> Interview by IPIS with Peul Mbororo leader in Paoua, November 2008.

<sup>112</sup> Interview by IPIS with Peul representative in Bangui, October 2008.



Burnt out house of civilians following retaliation operation of the FACA against the APRD (IPIS 2008)

## The North

### CAR

The North of the CAR is the smallest of the war-affected areas in the country but it is the only one that harbours two different rebel groups (who have engaged each other in the past). As in the Northwest, the region used to boast a rather important cotton industry that has been totally destroyed during the offensive of Bozizé and his Chadian troops in 2003<sup>113</sup>. The production has dropped to less than 10% of what it was at the end of the 1990's. Recently the picture has begun to look a bit less grim. The security situation in the area has improved greatly and the cotton sector is recovering<sup>114</sup>.

Many humanitarian organisations are present in the area, one of the main reasons being that the sub-prefecture of Kabo hosts the only camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the CAR.

### Presence of APRD

### Rebels

The northern APRD zone is smaller than its northwestern counterpart. In general the area under APRD rule is referred to as a triangle (Ouandago-Batangafa-Kabo), but it controls a few neighbouring axes too and the area north of Kaga-Bandoro. The APRD controls most of the roads and operates a number of checkpoints. Commercial transports have to pay a tax the APRD levies in return for securing the road<sup>115</sup>. Apart from this tax, people in the region currently suffer little from rebel activity. The APRD troops commanded by Colonel Lakoué are disciplined and commit very few human rights abuses<sup>116</sup>. On the contrary, it seems that people in the area enjoy a relative safety. The self-defence groups and *coupeurs de route* in the area have been integrated into the ranks of the APRD.

### Incidents

<sup>113</sup> It is generally asserted that the Chadian troops that accompanied Bozizé on his march to Bangui in 2003 were allowed to plunder the few riches of the CAR as a form of payment for their efforts.

<sup>114</sup> The cotton production has tripled over the last year (source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Country Report*, December 2008).

<sup>115</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD commander in the vicinity of Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

<sup>116</sup> Interviews by IPIS with local and international sources in Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

## Motives of APRD

Although officially part of the same movement, and hierarchically below Colonel Laurent, Colonel Lakoué displays a style of leadership that differs greatly from his superior. Lakoué runs his northern APRD zone with a limited use of force, behaving more as an administrator than as a war leader. His two major concerns are insecurity and poverty in his area<sup>117</sup>. He proclaims to have taken up arms to tackle them and the behaviour of his troops in the field seems to confirm this. The northern APRD tries to spare the local population as much as possible and provides for itself. It has organised special units for hunting, fishing, farming and herding<sup>118</sup>. It is clearly supportive of the development work undertaken by relief organisations and the clergy<sup>119</sup>. The APRD does not live on the back of the population and it has managed to secure the area under its control. In the course of 2008, it has not carried out any significant military operation against the FACA, neither has it tried to gain additional territory. Colonel Lakoué is not interested in a power position within the CAR government<sup>120</sup>.

It is interesting to note how the APRD above Kaga-Bandoro can continue to exist and maintain a solid organisation, even though it has only very limited resources.

## Presence of FACA

### FACA

The FACA presence in northern CAR is weak. In theory, they control the Kabo-Sido axis but the recent attack by the FDPC has shown that they do not. Besides Kabo and Sido Moyenne, the FACA only have positions in Ndélé and at the airfield of Awakaba, far from APRD area.

## Motives of FACA

The FACA is too undermanned to be able to perform its function. Isolated and slowly rotating units might cause problematic behaviour in the future.

## Presence and motives of FDPC

### Rebels

During most of 2008 the FDPC deployment was limited to a group of less than 20 fighters controlling a single village and its surrounding area. The group had a relative good understanding with a neighbouring FACA detachment that travelled back and forth on the road passing the FDPC camp. The FDPC used the FACA transports to supply itself and occasionally its members even hitched a ride on one of them<sup>121</sup>. There are two ways to explain why the FDPC would suddenly change its relatively peaceful behaviour. On the one hand, there is the possibility that the strike against the FACA transport was a mere accident caused by a panicking rebel who fired a rocket that caused a maximum of damage<sup>122</sup>.

However, the FDPC had previously been recruiting new soldiers and it had acquired new equipment. The concurrence of this reinforcement with renewed warfare casts doubt on the hypothesis of an accident. But if it was

<sup>117</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD commander in the vicinity of Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

<sup>118</sup> Interviews by IPIS with international observers in Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

<sup>119</sup> Interviews by IPIS with several relief workers in Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

<sup>120</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD commander in the vicinity of Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008. Sources close to Colonel Lakoué indicate that he might be interested in taking up a position in local politics or administration.

<sup>121</sup> Interview by IPIS with humanitarian worker from the Kabo area in Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

<sup>122</sup> A hypothesis suggested to IPIS by a high-level military observer.

an intentional act, what could have been its motivation? The FDPC was not under military strain from the other conflict parties in the region, making it unlikely it was fighting for its survival. Besides, for surviving purposes hiding would have been a better option. Moreover, the territory won by the FDPC is of little strategic value. It has no particular wealth and no major towns. The most likely explanation lies in the fact that the FDPC wanted to show itself as a force that needs to be reckoned with. With the upcoming political dialogue to be held in December, it probably wanted to force a seat at the table and strengthen its bargaining position. If that was the case, the primary motivation of the FDPC seems to be to participate in power.

### **Presence and motives of international troops**

## **Missions**

MICOPAX has a base in Kaga-Bandoro. It used to patrol only in a 10 km radius around Kaga-Bandoro out of obedience to the APRD that had forbidden it to venture any further. However, since September 2008 the MICOPAX patrols have been extended into the APRD zone and up to Kabo<sup>123</sup>. Naturally, this is an essential shift for a military operation whose mission is to “consolidate peace and stability, to assist in the defence of human rights and to prepare and support the elections of 2010”.

### **Presence and motives of *coupeurs de route***

Except for the fact that lately there is less activity of road bandits in the North, their operations and motivations are not particularly different from such groups in other parts of the CAR.

### **Presence and motives of transhumant pastoralists**

## **Trade routes**

It is important to note that Kaga-Bandoro lies on the busiest supply route for cattle to Bangui.

During the first half of 2008, the relationship between the APRD and the transhumant cattle drivers was very tense. The cowherds were forbidden to provision in the towns under APRD control because they were being suspected of complicity with the *coupeurs de route*<sup>124</sup>. Since August, however, the embargo was lifted and relations have returned to ‘normal’.

Besides the two remarks made above, the activities and motivations of the transhumant bands are not particularly different from the groups of cattle drivers in other parts of the CAR.

### **BOX 8: Recent developments (December 2008-January 2009)**

There have been a number of important political events during the months of December 2008 and January 2009.

From 8 to 20 December an ‘Inclusive Political Dialogue’ was held in Bangui. It was chaired by the former President of Burundi, Pierre Buyoya and attended by most of the leading figures of the Central African politico-military movements. At the dialogue, it was decided that a government of national unity should be created. On 30 December, the conclusion of the ‘Inclusive Political Dialogue’ was followed by a visit of APRD chairman Demafouth to Paoua where he asked forgiveness and declared peace in the presence

<sup>123</sup> Interview by IPIS with MICOPAX technical advisor in Bangui, November 2008.

<sup>124</sup> Interview by IPIS with APRD commander near Kaga-Bandoro, November 2008.

## Ethnic

of Colonel Laurent.

The incumbent government was dissolved on 18 January and a new cabinet sworn in on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Faustin Archange Touadéra was reappointed as prime minister, as were many members of his former government. A few positions changed, including the assignment of one (minor) position each to the UFDR and APRD. The new government was received with little enthusiasm and it remains to be seen whether the rebels will remain loyal members<sup>125</sup>.

In the meantime, the Libreville peace process has continued. In its framework a committee is working on a DDR programme for the CAR. The committee is presided over by BONUCA.

In the sphere of security, four developments should be monitored. Firstly, the presence of (another) UFDR splinter faction has been confirmed. Reportedly, the rebels are based near Ndélé and they denounce abuses committed by the UFDR against people of the Runga community<sup>126</sup>. The Runga have a problem with the UFDR leadership by Damane. They resist the fact they have been sidelined within both the UFDR and the diamond trade in the region<sup>127</sup>. The new movement has clashed on several occasions with the FACA.

Secondly, the FDPC remains outside the peace process and retains its positions in the North.

Thirdly, the APRD is relatively calm since the conclusion of the 'Inclusive Political Dialogue'. Although there has been a new confrontation with the FACA in the far Northwest, resulting in the burning down of several houses, reportedly it was not driven by political motives<sup>128</sup>. It illustrates, however, that the (northwestern) APRD remains an unpredictable conflict party.

In January, more than 4000 Central Africans fled across the border to Chad because they feared for renewed warfare.

Finally, the military operation against the LRA in the Northeast of the DRC continues, and for a while there have been reports that the LRA was heading for the CAR. The Central African government has declared that it would send reinforcements to the Southeast of the country<sup>129</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> The composition of the new government has received criticism of both the APRD and the political opposition. However, so far it did not result in an APRD boycott or renewed hostilities.

<sup>126</sup> HDPT CAR News Bulletin 92, January 2009.

<sup>127</sup> Telephone interviews by IPIS with military and humanitarian personnel, January 2009.

<sup>128</sup> Telephone interview by IPIS with French diplomat, January 2009.

<sup>129</sup> Reuters, *Central African Republic prepares to resist LRA rebels*, 12 January 2009.



Artisanal diamond miners at work near Sam Ouandja (IPIS 2008)

## Conclusion

Although there is no large-scale fighting and only little open warfare, one can rightly say that few regions of the CAR are really secure and that in fact the majority of the territory is in a permanent state of insecurity.

This report has tried to disentangle the accumulation of conflicts and to answer the questions: who wields weapons where and for what reasons?

The APRD is the most visible of the rebel groups. It controls a significant part of one of the most populated regions in the country. It was the last to sign a peace agreement with the government and it has broken the ceasefire on several occasions. Although an active conflict party, it is not offensive. Currently, it shows no tendency to extend the territory under its control. One can therefore assume that it agrees with the current status quo and that it is waiting for the results of the ongoing peace process.

There might be two reasons for this position. On the one hand, it is possible that the APRD is seeking a way out of the armed struggle. The political leadership might have come to the conclusion that its insurgency will not succeed in toppling the incumbent government and that in order to survive, it needs to strike a deal (including amnesty).

On the other hand, and this is more likely for the field commanders, the APRD could be hoping that the peace process will provide an answer to its grievances. Although the grievances of the APRD are not well articulated and nicely listed in a political manifesto, it seems they explain, at least partially, its motivation to fight and its behaviour in the field. This is certainly the case for the Lakoué branch of the movement.

It is interesting to note that the APRD area comprises all of the ethnic Sara territory in the North and Northwest of the CAR. However, several other ethnic groups (partly) live under APRD control and the incidents on the ground do not indicate that ethnic warfare is going on.

The UFDR has more means than the APRD but it has not engaged the FACA in 2008. On the contrary, it is cooperating with them. The UFDR of Damane is a loyal participant in the peace process. Besides the fact that it is less hostile to the FACA and the government in Bangui, its behaviour is comparable to that of their counterparts in the North(west). Throughout 2008, the UFDR has not shown any interest in power or profit. It has kept control over those areas inhabited by its ethnic group and it has waited for the outcome of the peace process and the start of a DDR programme. As with the APRD, this defensive stance could mean two things. On the one hand, the UFDR might have pulled back to its home region to ensure its survival and broker an acceptable deal out of the conflict. On the other hand, it might believe that the current process can generate a viable solution to its grievances.

Grievance-motivated or not, the UFDR has become a mono-ethnic movement. Incidents show that its relationship with the other ethnic groups is strained and at least two splinter groups have manifested themselves. Therefore, it is unlikely that the UFDR still voices the grievances of the Northeastern region as a whole.

There is a third rebel group that still has a military presence in the field and participates in negotiations with the government. However, the FDPC of General Miskine had virtually ceased to exist for most of 2008 until it suddenly re-emerged right before the start of the inclusive political dialogue. It boasts brand new equipment and runs an elaborate website, but it has never formulated any concrete grievances or demands. One can only assume that the 'new' FDPC wanted to weigh on the dialogue. Whether it wants to obtain an important political position or whether it is simply trying to sabotage the process, remains an open question.

The FACA has a very bad reputation. However, they have perpetrated less human rights violations in 2008 than the years before. Their behaviour towards the local population in remote corners of the country has improved. The Presidential Guard has carried out only few of its infamous missions in the interior.

Despite the improvements mentioned, they continue to be one of the most important violators of human rights in the country.

Moreover, they are still far from accomplishing their task of protecting the Central African Republic's territory and its population. This is mainly due to a lack of manpower and equipment. The Central African army is far too weak and small to protect its population from armed aggression.

Because of the FACA weakness (and the absence of the state in general), several other armed groups can roam almost freely on Central African territory. For the most part, these groups show parasitic behaviour towards both the CAR territory and its people.

The profit that can be made from controlling areas rich in natural resources is not a motivation to either of the major warring parties. None of them controls areas abundant with resources and none has tried to conquer one in the course of 2008. Bearing in mind that there are many resource-rich areas in the CAR and that none of them is particularly well-protected, this is an important observation that counters the belief of some that African rebels always fight for profit.

Some of the natural resources of the CAR do cause insecurity and attract heavily-armed groups but these are armed bandits that prefer to operate without being noticed and bothered. They are no rebels. They prefer not to engage the FACA and many of them are foreigners.

For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that some individual UFDR fighters generate an income from mining diamonds in neighbouring areas and that recent developments indicate that their control over some diamond areas is probably one of the reasons why a new ethnic militia in the region was organised.

# Recommendations

## Recommendations to stop APRD rebel activity

- The overall security in the CAR has to be restored by reinforcing the security services through an SSR program that pays sufficient attention to FACA discipline.
- A political opening has to be created. The prospect of free and fair elections in 2010 could be sufficient, but more APRD representation in the current government might be necessary too.
- It has to be ensured that the APRD field commanders stay involved during the rest of the peace process.
- A credible DDR process has to be organised.
- Government support for self-defence groups in the region should stop. The strengthening of self-defence groups can lead to uncontrollable conflict dynamics.
- The northwestern wing of the APRD needs to be disciplined. Its unpredictability compromises the peace process.
- In the longer run, the socio-economic neglect of the region needs to be countered.

## Recommendations to stop UFDR rebel activity

- The overall security in the CAR has to be restored by reinforcing the security services through an SSR program that pays sufficient attention to FACA discipline.
- A political opening has to be created. The prospect of free and fair elections in 2010 could be sufficient, but more UFDR representation in the current government might be necessary too.
- A credible DDR process has to be organised.
- The UFDR should be representative of all the peoples in its region. If it remains focussed on the Gula ethnicity, armed splinter groups may continue to emerge. To prevent this, another representative from another ethnic group in the region could be included in the peace process.
- The (occasional) presence of an international force in Haute-Kotto could help safeguarding stability in the region.
- In the longer run, the socio-economic neglect of the region needs to be countered.

## Recommendations to stop FDPC rebel activity

- The FACA should put enough military pressure on the FDPC to force it to re-enter the peace process.
- MICOPAX should be deployed closer to the FDPC-controlled area.
- A credible DDR process has to be organised.

## Recommendations to make the FACA do their job

- The FACA needs to be reinforced, especially in terms of extra personnel and better infrastructure/accommodation.
- The FACA needs to be disciplined. Examples should be set showing that human rights violations by soldiers result in prosecution and punishment.
- More FACA detachments should be deployed outside Bangui. They should be quartered in the interior of the country or at the borders.

## **Recommendations to tackle the issue of armed banditry (in its different forms)**

- The CAR state needs to enforce its unique right to bear arms.
- A larger state presence is required, especially of the Central African security services.
- Coordination with neighbouring states is needed.

## **Recommendations to solve the conflicts linked to the presence of transhumant pastoralists**

- The CAR state needs to enforce its unique right to bear arms.
- A larger state presence is required, especially of administrative and security services.
- Traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution have proven to be not effective enough.
- Coordination with neighbouring states is needed. A regional arrangement for mobile pastoralists has to be concluded.

# Abbreviations

AK	Kalashnikov's Automatic Rifle ( <i>Avtomat Kalashnikova</i> )
APRD	Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy ( <i>Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie</i> )
BECDOR	Ministry of Mines, Energy and Hydraulics - Office for the Evaluation and Control of Diamonds and Gold ( <i>Bureau d'Evaluation et de Contrôle de Diamants et Or</i> )
BONUCA	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic ( <i>Bureau d'appui des Nations Unies pour la consolidation de la paix en République centrafricaine</i> )
BPSI	Battalion for the Protection and Security of the Institutions ( <i>Batallion de Protection et de Sécurité des Institutions</i> )
BRGM	Office for Geological and Mining Research, France ( <i>Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières</i> )
CAR	Central African Republic
CARPE	Central African Regional Program for the Environment
CEEAC	<i>Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale</i> (= ECCAS)
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa ( <i>Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale</i> )
CFA	African Financial Community ( <i>Communauté Financière Africaine</i> )
CPR	Close Protection Company ( <i>Compagnie de Protection Rapprochée</i> )
DDR	Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration
DIADATA	Dataset on Diamonds, Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO
DPER	Ministry of Mines, Energy and Hydraulics - Direction of Planning, Studies and Research ( <i>Direction de la Programmation, des Etudes et de la Recherche</i> )
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States (= CEEAC)
ECOFAFAC	Conservation and rational utilisation of the Central African Forest Ecosystems ( <i>Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique Centrale</i> )
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Force
FACA	Central African Armed Forces ( <i>Forces Armées Centrafricaines</i> )
FAL	Light Automatic Rifle ( <i>Fusil Automatique Léger</i> )
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo ( <i>Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo</i> )
FDPC	Democratic Front of the Central African People ( <i>Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain</i> )
FNEC	National Federation of the Central African Breeders ( <i>Fédération Nationale des Eleveurs Centrafricains</i> )
FOMUC	Multinational Force in the Central African Republic ( <i>Force Multinationale en Centrafrique</i> )
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GP	Presidential Guard ( <i>Garde Présidentielle</i> )
HDPT	Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGN	National Geographical Institute, France ( <i>Institut Géographique National</i> )
IPIS	International Peace Information Service
JRC	European Commission Joint Research Centre
LACCEG	University of Bangui – Department of Geography - Laboratory of Climatology,

	Cartography and Geographical Studies ( <i>Laboratoire de Climatologie, de Cartographie et d'Etudes Géographiques</i> )
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MICOPAX	Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic ( <i>Mission de consolidation de la paix en Centrafrique</i> )
MLCJ	Movement of the Central African Liberators for Justice ( <i>Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricains pour la Justice</i> )
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ( <i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo</i> )
OCHA	(United Nations) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PARPAF	Support Project to the Realisation of Forest Arrangement Plans, Bangui ( <i>Projet d'Appui à la Réalisation de Plans d'Aménagement Forestier</i> )
PDRN	Northern Region Development Programme ( <i>Programme de Développement de la Région Nord</i> )
PKM	Kalashnikov's Machine gun Modernized ( <i>Pulemet Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy</i> )
RPG	Rocket-propelled grenade ( <i>Ruchnoy Protivotankoviy Granatomyot</i> )
SEBOCA	<i>Société d'Exploitation des Bois de Centrafrique</i>
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UDF	Ugandan Defence Forces
UFDR	Union of the Democratic Forces for Unity ( <i>Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement</i> )
UFR	Union of the Republican Forces ( <i>Union des Forces Républicaines</i> )
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council



Artisanal diamond miners sifting gravel (IPIS 2008)