

Central African Republic: Forced Displacement From CAR Continuing Amid Widespread Lawlessness
By UNHCR
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PRESS RELEASE

This is a summary of what was said by UNHCR spokesperson Adrian Edwards - to whom quoted text may be attributed - at the press briefing, on 13 August 2013, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

UNHCR is continuing to see forced displacement within and from Central African Republic. Inside CAR itself there are now an estimated 206,000 Internally Displaced People. Since mid-July we have seen an additional 4,125 refugees arriving in the Moissala area of southern Chad.

There are now 62,714 refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries since the latest CAR crisis erupted last December - 40,500 of these in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 13,087 in Chad, 4,841 in Republic of Congo, and 4,286 in Cameroon.

UNHCR remains extremely concerned over the situation inside CAR, with continuing reports of lawlessness and insecurity in many areas. In Bangui, a local UN staff member was the victim of an attack by rogue Seleka elements on Sunday night. They raided his home at midnight, ordered him to give them money, then took his bike and shot him in the chest. He is now recovering from the wound. Another local UN staff member was seriously wounded and her husband killed during a similar incident a week ago. Such night attacks in Bangui have become increasingly common.

In rural areas, widespread fear is reported among the civilian population, who are responding in some cases by organizing vigilante groups. Clashes between the local population and elements of Seleka took place in the morning yesterday and the day before at Beboura, a village located 30 km from Paoua, a town near the Chadian border. The exact toll is still unknown but wounded people have been transported to a hospital in Paoua. This past weekend we also received reports of two people having been killed by armed men allegedly affiliated to Seleka in Bossangoa, in the northwest prefecture of Ouham. Thirty other people were reported killed by the Seleka in the same area.

Access for humanitarian workers remains difficult, although we now have better access to the refugee camps at Bambari, Batalimo, and Zemio in central and southern CAR - which together host 11,252 mainly Congolese and Sudanese refugees. We completed a second round of food distribution in the camps last week, coupled with distribution of mosquito nets, blanket, plastic sheeting and kitchen sets for 8,000 refugees and 796 vulnerable people in the host population.

UNHCR is again calling on the CAR government to do more to ensure the safety of people and their property across the country, to avert further displacement and suffering.

We are also appealing to public and private donors to support this forgotten crisis. As of last Friday, our CAR operation was less than 30 per cent funded. We have so far received US\$ 8 million out of the US\$ 28.8 million required to help refugees in neighbouring countries.

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