



# International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

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## Committee on Enforced Disappearances Twenty-eighth session

### Summary record of the 517th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 19 March 2025, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Kolaković-Bojović (Vice-Chair)

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*Ms. Kolaković-Bojović (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

**Consideration of reports of States Parties under article 29 (1) and additional information under article 29 (4) of the Convention** *(continued)*

*Replies of the Central African Republic to the list of issues in the absence of its report due under article 29 (1) of the Convention (CED/C/CAF/QAR/1; CED/C/CAF/RQAR/1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Central African Republic joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the meeting, explained that the other members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that the replies to the list of issues (CED/C/CAF/RQAR/1) should be regarded as his country's initial report under article 29 (1) of the Convention. The replies, which covered the period 2016–2024, had been prepared by the standing committee for the drafting of reports and follow-up to recommendations in a participatory process involving government departments, the National Assembly, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and civil society organizations.
4. As the Central African Republic was a monist State, the Convention had, upon ratification, become part of its domestic law. The provisions of the Convention were enforceable by the national courts and the competent authorities were bound to respect and uphold them. In addition, national legislation had been passed to enshrine the right to protection from enforced disappearance. Although the Constitution of 2023 did not specifically mention enforced disappearance, it nevertheless proclaimed the sacred and inviolable character of the human person; enshrined the rights to life, to liberty and security of person, to a public hearing and to the protection of the public authorities; and prohibited acts of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, all of which contributed to protection from enforced disappearance. The Criminal Code went further than article 2 of the Convention by listing groups of persons who might commit the crime of enforced disappearance, which was categorized as a crime against humanity. Related offences, such as unlawful arrest, kidnapping, hostage-taking, abduction, trafficking in persons, child trafficking and slavery, carried severe punishments.
5. The Central African Republic had robust institutions and comprehensive programmes to prevent and punish the crime of enforced disappearance. Various ministries were mandated to protect and safeguard the rights of different categories of persons. Under articles 320 and 321 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the country's courts had established universal and territorial jurisdiction over crimes of enforced disappearance in accordance with article 9 of the Convention. Besides the national courts, the Central African Republic had a Special Criminal Court, composed of national and international judges, which on 27 February 2024 had issued an international arrest warrant against the former President, François Bozizé, for serious crimes against international human rights law, including enforced disappearance.
6. The Government had policies on justice and on human rights that were particularly important for protection from enforced disappearance. The justice policy had two main goals: to restore justice throughout the country following the recurrent crises from which it was emerging; and to combat impunity by providing human, material and financial resources and strengthening the judiciary. The national human rights policy provided an overall strategic framework for the promotion and protection of human rights. The policy, which would be implemented initially through a five-year action plan for the period 2023–2027 with a provisional budget of 3 billion CFA francs (CFAF), placed particular emphasis on meeting the commitments given under international and regional human rights instruments.
7. The Government firmly wished to promote and protect human rights throughout the Central African Republic. With the cooperation of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and civil society organizations working in the area of

human rights and with the support of technical and financial partners, significant progress had been made. Nevertheless, in view of the challenges that remained, the Government called upon the universal human rights system to provide it with the support it needed to achieve the shared goal of upholding human dignity.

8. **Mr. Diop** (Country Rapporteur), noting that the State Party had not submitted its initial report within two years of the Convention's entry into force, but had submitted the replies to the list of issues in lieu of a report in July 2024, said that he would be interested to know, in view of the current prevalence of intercommunal tension and the presence of armed rebel movements in the country, which elements of civil society had been involved in the preparation of that document. He would also be grateful for information on the membership and mandate of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the process for the appointment of its members and the safeguards put in place to ensure their independence. Noting that the Commission's budget had risen from CFAF 30 million to CFAF 75 million in 2024, he said he wished to know whether that budget was sufficient for the Commission to function effectively and to meet its objectives.

9. As the State Party had reported that it planned to make the declarations provided for in articles 31 and 32 of the Convention "in due course", he would like to know whether the time had come to do so and, if not, what obstacles prevented the State party from recognizing the Committee's competence to receive and consider individual and inter-State communications.

10. The State Party had informed the Committee that it planned to work closely with technical and financial partners to facilitate the creation and roll-out of a national database on alleged or confirmed cases of enforced disappearance. In that regard, he wondered whether such cooperation had been forthcoming since the submission of the replies to the list of issues and, if not, whether the State Party would be able to create the national database without it. It would be interesting to know whether the authorities maintained databases on any persons who had been reported missing.

11. The Committee noted that article 153 of the Criminal Code listed certain categories of persons who might commit the crime of enforced disappearance as a crime against humanity, and that, where enforced disappearance did not constitute a crime against humanity, the revised Criminal Code would establish a separate offence of enforced disappearance in accordance with article 2 of the Convention. The Committee would therefore welcome confirmation of whether the Criminal Code had indeed been amended to establish a separate offence of enforced disappearance, together with information on any other elements of the State Party's legal and institutional arsenal that might allow for the investigation of cases of enforced disappearance. It would be useful to know by which criminal law provisions the courts could prosecute perpetrators of enforced disappearance in cases where it was deemed an offence rather than a crime against humanity.

12. Given the scale of the problems facing the country, including intercommunal conflicts, rebellions and political tensions, it was remarkable that the only court to have considered a case involving enforced disappearance was the Special Criminal Court, in the context of the warrant issued against François Bozizé. He wondered why the former President was the only person suspected of that crime, when presumably he was the instigator and not the direct perpetrator of enforced disappearances. What had become of those who had perpetrated enforced disappearances on his orders?

13. Reports from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) suggested that various armed groups were responsible for dozens of abductions in the context of intercommunal violence. As such abductions often led to enforced disappearances, he wished to know what had been done to bring the perpetrators to justice. He would like to know whether there had been any complaints in relation to disappearances perpetrated by mercenaries, private military companies, or paramilitary or self-defence groups, including ex-Séléka and anti-balaka factions and the Wagner Group, and, if so, what steps the authorities had taken to investigate the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

14. The Committee would welcome information on measures taken by the State Party to search for and locate missing persons; to encourage and facilitate the reporting of disappearances; and to support the relatives of persons who had gone missing.

15. The Committee would be grateful if the delegation could comment on reports that, in May 2024, the 11 members of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission had been removed from office after conducting a mission to investigate abductions and enforced disappearances in the south-west of the country. If the reports were true, the delegation might explain why the members had been dismissed, whether they had been replaced and how the Commission could be expected to work independently when its members could be dismissed at any time for reasons related to the discharge of their mandate.

16. **Mr. de Frouville** (Country Rapporteur), welcoming the information that enforced disappearance as a crime against humanity was not subject to any statute of limitations, said that he, too, wished to know whether a separate offence of enforced disappearance had been established under the revised Criminal Code. If so, he would like to know whether the offence was subject to a statute of limitations in accordance with article 8 of the Convention.

17. The State Party had alluded to articles 320 and 321 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in respect of its competence to exercise jurisdiction over the offence of enforced disappearance. Article 320 provided that the courts could try perpetrators of or accomplices to offences committed outside the country in cases where the law of the Central African Republic was applicable or an international convention granted them jurisdiction. Article 321 provided for the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the courts to try persons who had committed offences under the specific international treaties referred to under articles 322–334 of the Code. Article 335 provided for the prosecution of persons who had committed offences under other conventions or agreements duly ratified by the State Party. He wished to know whether article 335 implicitly included the Convention and thus established a legal basis for the courts to establish extraterritorial jurisdiction over crimes of enforced disappearance committed abroad. He wondered whether the Code of Criminal Procedure might be amended by inserting a specific article referring to the Convention in the title on offences committed abroad. The delegation might also clarify whether article 335 covered the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, so that the Central African courts could exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction over crimes under the Rome Statute.

18. He wished to know how the different roles played by the national courts, the Special Criminal Court and the International Criminal Court were defined and managed. In particular, it would be useful to know how the State Party dealt with situations in which two different courts had taken action against the same person, as when the International Criminal Court and the Special Criminal Court had issued arrest warrants against Edmond Beina. He would like to learn whether any acts of enforced disappearance had been prosecuted as crimes against humanity before the national courts.

19. It would be interesting to know whether the State Party would consider amending its laws to ensure that military courts could never have jurisdiction over any cases of enforced disappearance, including those involving military personnel. He wished to hear which authorities were authorized to conduct investigations into cases of enforced disappearance or abduction committed by armed groups or by the Armed Forces in connection with the conflicts taking place in the Central African Republic. It would be useful to learn what action was taken in response to the reports of human rights violations compiled by MINUSCA.

20. He would like to know how the State Party ensured that the judicial or military authorities in conflict zones had access to places of deprivation of liberty where abducted persons might be found. He would be grateful for examples of any measures taken to gain access to any locations where disappeared persons might be held, including unofficial places of deprivation of liberty. He would like to know what procedures were in place to ensure the protection of complainants, witnesses, the family members of disappeared or detained persons, and all other persons participating in investigations into enforced disappearance, including investigative and legal officers.

21. According to a recent MINUSCA report on serious human rights violations committed by Wagner Ti Azande and Azande Ani Kpi Gbe between 1 and 7 October 2024, seven Fulani persons, including two teenage boys, had been killed on their way to the market in Dembia.

The victims had been detained, tied up and thrown alive into the Ouara River. As of the date of publication of the report, their bodies had not been found.

22. In 2023, MINUSCA had documented 41 cases of arrest and unlawful detention carried out by the Armed Forces, involving 98 victims, and 25 violations carried out by other security personnel, involving 63 victims. In the Committee's view, some of those cases could constitute acts of enforced disappearance. For example, in January 2023, a mentally ill man had been arrested in Haute-Kotto by members of the Armed Forces, who had tied him up and tortured him before handing him over to other security personnel. No investigation into that violation had been launched to date.

23. In August 2023, members of the Armed Forces had arrested and illegally detained 11 men in Obo, in Haut-Mbomou. The victims had been locked in a container near the military base, where gendarmes had come to question them. The 11 men had been subjected to inhumane treatment and, after five days, had been handed over to the gendarmerie in Obo on the instructions of the Bangui prosecution service. No legal action had been taken against the perpetrators of that violation.

24. In January 2023, members of the Armed Forces had arrested and unlawfully detained four men in Mambéré-Kadéï. The men had been locked up in a military base. In December 2023, two members of other security forces, accompanied by a gendarme, had unlawfully arrested six civilians in a village in the prefecture of Nana-Mambéré. Those civilians had been unlawfully detained at a military base before being transferred to a base managed by other security personnel, who had tortured them and subjected them to forced labour. To date, no investigation into the violations had been launched.

25. In March 2023, a man had been taken to the police station in Bria by local people, who had accused him of theft. The following day, other security personnel had taken him and three other persons to their base, where they had subjected them to forced labour. To date, no investigation into that violation had been launched. The Committee would be grateful for information on any plans in place to investigate those violations and any measures taken to protect witnesses.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 4.05 p.m.*

26. **A representative of the Central African Republic**, speaking via video link, said that the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was a pluralist body made up of members of civil society, representatives of minority groups, religious leaders, activists for women's rights, representatives of non-governmental organizations, academics, lawyers and judges. The members were appointed internally and the appointments were then ratified by presidential decree. Once the decree had been issued, the members met and agreed on the assignment of the different roles within the Commission.

27. The Commission was subject only to the law, which provided for its independence in administrative matters and in the management of its budget. The State was required to provide the Commission with all the resources that it needed to implement its mandate. The Commission was not subject to any orders, guidance or threats aimed at influencing the manner in which it conducted its work.

28. The Commission's budget was insufficient, in that it covered its running costs but not the full implementation of its mandate. However, the Commission was able to carry out monitoring work and some operations in different parts of the country. It received support from the international community, including MINUSCA, the Human Rights Division of the Embassy of France, the European Union and the Embassy of the United States of America.

29. The Commission was continuing to lobby the Government for increased funding. In 2025, its budget had been increased from CFAF 75 million to CFAF 90 million. It had been contacted about a number of possible cases of enforced disappearance. When it received such reports, the Commission acted in accordance with its guidelines on handling complaints, which applied to all kinds of human rights violations.

30. **A representative of the Central African Republic**, speaking via video link, said that enforced disappearance would be established as a separate offence in the revised Criminal Code. The drafts of the revised Criminal Code and the revised Code of Criminal Procedure

were currently being examined by a governmental commission and would be submitted to the Council of Ministers for adoption in the coming days before being transmitted to the parliament.

31. The Special Criminal Court had issued an arrest warrant against former President François Bozizé as the instigator of human rights violations. The International Criminal Court had issued over 70 warrants for the arrest of other perpetrators of violations in the Central African Republic.

32. The Government cooperated willingly with MINUSCA and considered its reports to be reliable sources of information. The Ministry of Justice conducted investigations into all the human rights violations reported by MINUSCA, including those committed in Mbomou against members of the Fulani community. The Ministry had set up a judicial commission of inquiry that had met with certain actors in Bangui before travelling to the areas concerned to take statements from witnesses and collect evidence. The commission had sent a report to the Ministry, which had made a public statement announcing the initiation of proceedings against the alleged perpetrators.

33. Some of the perpetrators identified had been arrested and others were expected to be arrested within the coming days. Proceedings were being initiated against the arrested persons. Depending on the outcome of the investigations under way, the Ministry would determine whether it was appropriate for the perpetrators to be tried by the national courts or by the Special Criminal Court, whose resources were more extensive.

34. The relations between the national courts, the Special Criminal Court and the International Criminal Court were based on the principle of subsidiarity. If the national courts had the capacity to prosecute an offence, they would do so. Complex cases that required additional resources could be referred to the Special Criminal Court and cases that could not be tried by the Special Criminal Court could be referred to the International Criminal Court. The Special Criminal Court was organized on the model of the international courts and had mechanisms for protecting victims and witnesses.

35. The Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission had not been wound down by the Government. The independence of the Commission was established in law and the Government had done everything possible to avoid interfering with it. The dispute that had hindered the Commission's work was personal in nature and had been addressed by an intersectoral group presided over by the President of the National Human Rights Commission.

36. The Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission and the Special Criminal Court had both been established as independent transitional justice bodies. While the mandate of the Special Criminal Court had been renewed following the completion of its first five-year term, the Truth, Justice and Reparation Commission had not implemented its mandate. In view of that situation, the Government had eventually taken measures to enable the Commission to begin its work. A committee made up of representatives of civil society and State officials had been set up to appoint the new members of the Truth, Justice and Reparation Commission, through a call for applications based on criteria that it had defined. The committee had now selected the new members and submitted its report to the Head of State, who would issue a decree ratifying the appointments.

37. The Constitution established that the treaties duly ratified by the Central African Republic formed an integral part of the national legal system and could be applied by the courts. The national authorities were required to implement them and to ensure that they were implemented. Although the Criminal Code did not refer to all the treaties ratified by the Central African Republic, their applicability was provided for in the Constitution, which had supremacy over other legislation.

38. The only formal complaint concerning acts of enforced disappearance that had been received thus far related to the case against former President François Bozizé. The National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had received reports of cases of enforced disappearance and had responded by conducting investigations. When such reports were received from MINUSCA and human rights actors in the field, the Ministry of Justice had, in each case, instructed public prosecutors' offices and criminal investigation units to

conduct investigations and gather evidence, even when the security situation in the area in question was unstable. Although the progress of some investigations might appear to be slow, the Government was committed to fully investigating all reports of such crimes and bringing perpetrators to justice with a view to combating impunity, which was essential to restoring peace and development to the country.

39. While both civil and military courts operated in the Central African Republic, the Government was committed to excluding military jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance. Discussions had been held at multiple levels of Government with a view to establishing special courts for prosecuting such cases. The Code of Criminal Procedure would be amended to include provision for dealing with cases of enforced disappearance in line with the amendments to the Criminal Code establishing that offence as a stand-alone crime.

40. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that there were no registers dedicated to cases of enforced disappearance, which had become a more prominent phenomenon only following recent events. The National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had discovered during visits to penal establishments that many did not keep up-to-date registers of inmates. During a recent investigation of a death that had occurred at a police station, the Commission had discovered that no register of detainees had been kept at that station for almost a year. Such findings had been reported and relevant investigations were ongoing. More cases of enforced disappearance had begun to be identified since the recent establishment of the Special Criminal Court. While the Commission was aware of a number of reports of cases of enforced disappearance, it lacked the means to conduct investigations in the field that would enable it to verify such reports. Nonetheless, there was every indication that cases of disappearance had taken place that the State had not yet investigated.

41. **Mr. Diop** said that the Committee wished to know whether the State Party had received the financial support that it had declared necessary to establish registers of persons reported missing. Given the likely low cost of establishing such registers, he would be interested to learn what obstacles the State Party would face in the absence of such support.

42. It would be useful to learn whether it was the role of the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms to conduct its own investigations into reports of cases of suspicious or involuntary disappearance, or whether it transmitted such reports to the criminal investigation police or an investigating judge. It appeared clear from the mention of 70 arrest warrants that there were cases of suspected involuntary disappearance in the country that were known to the authorities. Given that a committee had been charged with appointing new members of the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission, he would welcome clarification as to whether that Commission had been dissolved and, if so, for what reason. He wondered what role the Commission had played in investigating and prosecuting crimes, which appeared to be the responsibility of prosecutors' offices and judges.

43. **Mr. de Frouville** said that the Committee would like to know when the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure were likely to be submitted to the Council of Ministers for adoption. He would be grateful to learn more about the recently investigated cases that were to be added to the charges brought against former President François Bozizé by the Special Criminal Court, and particularly whether they included cases of enforced disappearance. He would welcome clarification as to which court – the International Criminal Court, the Special Criminal Court or a national court – had issued the 70 arrest warrants for human rights violations.

44. It would also be useful to hear about the progress of investigations into human rights violations committed by armed groups that opposed the Government, which the State Party was obligated to investigate and prosecute under article 3 of the Convention. Reports from MINUSCA concerned abductions and acts of disappearance committed by such groups against the civilian population, including in the context of forced recruitment of children, and the case of a number of young people in Mbomou, who had most likely been murdered, but whose bodies had not yet been located. He wished to know whether any arrests had been made in connection with those acts and would be grateful if the delegation could provide him

with the public statement that he understood the Ministry of Justice to have made regarding the latter case.

45. He would like to learn how the Government ensured, in the context of investigations conducted by the national authorities, including in conflict zones, that victims and witnesses were protected and received social, psychological and other support, particularly in the case of families that had found themselves in a state of extreme vulnerability as a result of the violations committed. How, for example, had it done so when responding to the serious human rights violations that been committed by the armed groups Wagner Ti Azande and Azande Ani Kpi Gbe between 1 and 7 October in Dembia and Rafai?

46. **Mr. Diop** said that he still wished to know when the State Party anticipated that it would recognize the Committee's competence under articles 31 and 32 of the Convention to receive and consider individual and inter-State communications and what obstacles prevented it from doing so.

47. **Ms. Villa Quintana** said that she wished to know how, in view of the very small budget of the National Commission on Human Rights and its apparent reliance on support from the international community, the State Party intended to ensure that the Commission enjoyed the stability that it needed to discharge its duties. It would be useful to hear how often police station and prison registers were updated, at what point they were expected to be properly maintained and when they would become interoperable. She also wondered whether any proceedings had been brought against the person in charge of the police station where the death had occurred.

48. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and National Reconciliation and the Ministry of Justice, which oversaw the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission, had submitted several reports indicating that discord between members of the Commission had prevented it from functioning properly for several years. Following those reports, in May 2024, the President of the Central African Republic had terminated the mandate of its members and, as provided for by law, an independent committee had been charged with appointing new members. The President had received that committee's decisions and was responsible for ratifying them.

49. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that other partners that had supported the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission had also witnessed the extent of its paralysis over the course of the previous four years, which had prevented it from achieving anything meaningful in that time.

50. The proposed amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure would be submitted to the Council of Ministers in the coming days and, subsequently, to the parliament. Although the parliament was unlikely to discuss them before its second ordinary session, in mid-2025, the Government could call an extraordinary session of the parliament for that purpose, if needed.

51. By law, up-to-date registers of detainees with information on their movement in and out of facilities had to be maintained at all places of detention – including those run by criminal police investigation units – at all times. Failures had been discovered only at certain facilities and were not global in nature.

52. The National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was an independent body that carried out its mission as provided for by law. As a partner of the State, it reported information – including cases of human rights violations that it had identified – to the authorities, including the Ministry of Justice, the President and the parliament. Like similar bodies in other countries, and as provided for by law, the Commission was funded primarily from the State budget. Despite the country's lack of resources, the Government had doubled the funding allocated to the Commission and would continue to increase it to the extent possible. While the Commission also received financial support from the international community, it was not dependent on funding from that source.

53. The five-year action plan that formed part of the Government's national human rights policy, which was intended to remedy shortcomings in meeting human rights obligations that were a result of the years of instability in the country, included steps towards recognizing the

Committee's competence under articles 31 and 32 of the Convention to receive and consider individual and inter-State communications.

54. In response to the commission of human rights violations in Mbomou, the Ministry of Justice had established an investigating committee that was chaired by the principal public prosecutor in the local area and comprised officers from the criminal investigation police and the armed forces. The committee had been able to stay in the area and to speak with the local authorities and with victims and witnesses, whom the Government had taken measures to protect. Both the report of the investigating committee and the public statement made by the Ministry of Justice were available and would be provided to the Committee. Prosecutions had been opened against the suspected perpetrators thus far identified, and those responsible would be brought to justice following a full and proper investigation.

55. The arrest warrant issued against former President François Bozizé concerned crimes including enforced disappearance that he was accused of instigating. His case and those of the many others named in the 70 arrest warrants, who were accused of committing, or being accomplices to, human rights violations, were pending before that Court. Many criminal cases were also pending before the national courts of appeal, which had responsibility for prosecuting such cases. The Bangui Court of Appeal conducted two such trials per quarter. Military courts had also conducted criminal trials of military personnel who had been accused of committing violations while performing their duties. Cases that the domestic courts lacked the necessary resources to handle were transferred to the Special Criminal Court. As a Party to the Rome Statute, the Central African Republic was also able to apply to the International Criminal Court for assistance with cases that the Special Criminal Court was unable to handle. A manual for cooperation between the three types of court had been developed.

56. While they had not been registered in the form of official complaints, it was possible that cases of enforced disappearance had been documented in criminal investigation files, the content of which was confidential and unknown to the delegation. The laws of the Central African Republic provided for the compensation of victims of enforced disappearance. While the resources available to the Government were not always sufficient to cover awards of compensation made by the national courts, funds for compensating victims were available through the International Criminal Court. The Government was committed to establishing a fund for victims when resources permitted.

57. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had received verbal reports of acts of enforced disappearance when visiting the provinces of the country and information about such acts via the radio, but it was often difficult to locate reported witnesses and victims and obtain reliable information from them that would enable the Commission to verify reports. Although, as a result, the Commission had been unable to complete any investigations thus far, by law it was competent to do so and could request the support of the competent authorities, for example in conducting searches, providing it with reports or conducting tests, to help it fulfil its mandate. In suspected cases of disappearance, the Commission could also ask the police to conduct investigations in its place and report to it on its findings. It could report refusals to cooperate with the Commission to the local authorities, including the principal public prosecutor of the area in question.

58. The Commission had joined MINUSCA on a mission to Mbomou and had documented the human rights violations that had taken place in Dembia and Rafai. It had sent a briefing note to the Ministry of Justice and other governmental bodies in which it had made recommendations for putting a stop to the violations that were being committed. In response, the Government had taken a number of measures while the Commission was still in the field. The Commission had also contributed to the report that MINUSCA had issued.

59. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that, while, pursuant to the Code of Criminal Procedure, criminal investigations were conducted exclusively by the criminal investigation police under the supervision of the public prosecutor, the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms had considerable capacity to conduct investigations with the support of the authorities, to which it reported its findings.

60. **Mr. de Frouville** said that, while he understood that confidential details of investigations could not be shared with the Committee, it would be useful to receive more

information about the facts of cases that were under investigation, which would help the Committee to determine which of the violations that MINUSCA had identified were being investigated. It would be particularly helpful to receive more information about those cases of deprivation of liberty in unofficial places of detention that had been mentioned in a report issued by MINUSCA in July 2024, a large number of which reportedly remained uninvestigated. Receiving more information about efforts beyond those of the Special Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute such crimes would help the Committee to gain a better appreciation of the State Party's commitment to combating impunity in the country.

61. **A representative of the Central African Republic** said that the Central African Republic was emerging from three decades of military and political crisis and was rebuilding the foundations of its society, including its judicial system. Although, as a result, it faced challenges in combating impunity, it was committed to doing so and was making considerable efforts towards that objective. Following the violations committed by the Azande Ani Kpi Gbe armed group in Mbomou, the Ministry of Justice had immediately set up a local court in the area, which attested to its determination not to leave such crimes unpunished. The Government would be glad to invite the Committee to visit the country so that it could appreciate first-hand its efforts to combat impunity, ensure that people were protected and restore human dignity.

*The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.*