An Examination of Peacebuilding Initiatives in the Central African Republic

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"Following the Séléka coup, the disintegration of the state has exacerbated local conflicts and banditry giving rise to constant insecurity in Bangui and the provinces. This violence in itself perpetuates the crisis as bloodshed feeds mistrust, fear, and the desire for revenge. Given the breakdown of law and order, the current crisis is a combination of multiple conflicts with national and local dimensions and violent crimes."[1]

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Central African Republic (CAR) is located in the heart of the African continent. Although being extremely rich in natural resources, it has been plagued by decades of instability after gaining independence from its former, but still very much present, colonial power, France. It has experienced many corrupt leaders and foreign backed coup d'états, that saw an extensive power vacuums and failed governments. As one of the world's poorest countries, the population is divided and is still in the midst of a seemingly endless humanitarian and political conflict even though there have been significant endeavors to achieve peace.[2] According to the 2016 United Nations' (UN) Development Report, CAR is ranked in the last position at 188 out of 188 countries in terms of successful development.[3]

The country has been experiencing extensive violence and chaos since the end of 2012. In 2014, the conflict was described as the 'worst crisis you've never heard of' by Samantha Powers, former United States Ambassador to the UN.[4] Being one of the world's under-reported crises, multiple international organizations, including the UN, referred to the conflict as neglected. Half of CAR's population faces hunger and is in extreme need of aid due to the conflict. The donor fatigue and the lack of interest comes from the fact that CAR is not seen as a political player and insignificant on the global level. It is a country that is not well-known and is not mentioned on the international stage, but CAR has 4 million suffering people. In terms of aid, there is money coming into CAR, there is a fairly large peacekeeping mission but the fact is

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[1] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic." *Conciliation Resources: Working Together Peace*, November 2015.

[2] "Central African Republic Worst Country in the World for Young People - Study." *Reuters Health E-Line*, October 21, 2016.

[3] United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2016* (New York: United Nations, 2016). Available from http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf.

[4] Sengupta, Somini. "U.N. Ambassador, in Central Africa, Vows Aid and Hears of a Unity Shattered." *New York Times* (New York, N.Y.), December 20, 2013.

that the conflict is not receiving much attention from donors or from the larger public. The appeal for aid in CAR is grossly underfunded. The healthcare standards have decreased, there is an emergence of diseases that have been eliminated in other parts of the world now resurfacing. Moreover, since the crisis started, the events have been overshadowed by other conflicts in the world, specifically the Russian military intervention of Ukraine, Syria's civil war, and the rise of the so-called Islamic State. But there is still an obligation to ensure that the Central Africans can create development to the best of their ability.

CAR has been suffering the consequences of long-running violence and a history of political abuse, leaving the landlocked country in a crisis that has seen, at the time of writing, strong efforts to resolve the conflict but simultaneously, a re-emergence of violence. In this thesis, I will discuss the historical background of CAR, the conflicts' origins, ethnic cleansing, and the peacebuilding process. The research question for this thesis is what steps have been taken to facilitate stability and peacebuilding by both the local and international community during the current crisis? What has the peacebuilding process entailed and why has it not been sustainable?

Methodology

This thesis will be conducted by utilizing peacebuilding literature, from definitions created by the UN to critical academic text on the subject. It will also employ reports from international and humanitarian organizations and news agencies to collect data from the various actors present in CAR in order to provide context. By using an observational and research case study, I will apply the peacebuilding literature to the Central African case and include the established initiatives to determine why peace has not yet been achieved despite the efforts. This research "case study relies on multiple sources of evidence and multiple data collection techniques."[5] The main technique that will be employed includes researching prior peace treaties, religious actors roles, the UN Mission, amongst others.

The theoretical framework that will apply to the Central African case study is humanitarianism and it is discussed later in the text. Humanitarianism as a theory is extremely applicable to my research and to the subject because of CAR's colonial history, the presence of

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[5] Iacono, Jessica, Ann Brown, and Clive Holtham. "Research Methods - a Case Example of Participant Observation." *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods* 7, no. 1 (2009): 41.

humanitarian and international actors, etc. It will also address the nexus between peacebuilding and humanitarianism.

I will argue that the peacebuilding has failed because most of their initiatives are created externally. There is a lack of political participation from CAR citizens in these decisions and agreements. Also, the warring armed groups do not have confidence in ceasefires; there is severe distrust of the 'other' and discourages disarmament. There has not been a sufficient amount of effort dedicated to the education aspect of peacebuilding and this is a major concern because it is necessary in order to create sustainable stability, particularly amongst the youth.

The research design of a case study is a practical choice for this topic because due to financial and physical limitations, I am not able to conduct independent research in the country nor have I been able to conduct interviews with Central African citizens affected by the conflict and contact international actors on the ground.

1.1 Conceptualizing CAR

CAR gained independence in 1960, alongside most of the other French colonies in Africa. The country was not equipped to be a fully-fledged state when granted independence because it lacked prominent governing institutions and was led by autocratic leaders. French officials remained present in all sectors of government, security agreements and treaties that ensured France could continue to promote its interests in CAR politics and economic production. Therefore, the local population did not have an overwhelming sense of independence because their colonizer was present in the decolonization process.[6]

The first Central African president was David Dacko. Dacko created a one-party state with Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa-MESAN as the only political party in 1962. As a result, he was re-elected as president because he was the only candidate in the 1964 elections.[7]

The French and their business interests intervened to put their preferred candidate in power in 1965. France supported Jean-Bédel Bokassa for CAR leadership and facilitated

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[6] Ubaku, Kelechi Chika, Chikezie Anyalewachi Emeh and Kelechi Collins Okoro. "Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Post-Independence Africa: Focus on Central African Republic." *International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Education*, June 2015.

[7] Le Vine, Victor. "The Central African Republic: Insular Problems of an Inland State." *Africa Report*, no. 10 (1965): 17.

Dacko's ousting during the period when the country was facing bankruptcy and on the brink of a nationwide strike. Bokassa, an army commander, can be characterized as an archetypal African dictator, who modeled himself after Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1976, Bokassa proclaimed himself emperor and officially named the country the "Central African Empire."[8] For the Central Africans, he is remembered as a nationalist, an extravagant leader that was the last politician to build anything of note. In CAR's capital city, Bangui, most of the infrastructure and city buildings, including the country's only university, were constructed during Bokassa's reign. To this day, he is considered to be a glorified leader.[9]

Dacko, in collaboration with the French, ousted Bokassa after 11 years in power while he was on official state business to Libya. French parachutists invaded CAR and occupied all strategic posts and Dacko again resumed power in 1979. The motivation for this coup was caused by widespread protests due to the detainment and murder of schoolchildren who refused to purchase school uniforms from a wife of Bokassa.[10]

In the 1970s, economic decline started due to foreign businessmen and their interests leaving, the price of global communities dropping, and the country's money being mismanaged. CAR has yet to fully recover from these events. The 1980s and 1990s saw adjustments in governmental structures, a reduction of civil services rolls and presidents who ruled with clientelism methods, combined with a donor-led push for a multi-party democracy in the early 1990s, made for an unstable mix. In the mid-1990s, army mutinies occurred followed by several coup attempts and a rebellion. There were two coup successful attempts.[11]

In March 2003, a former head of the army, François Bozizé, claimed power by seizing Bangui and declaring himself president. He then dissolved the parliament and established a transitional government. A referendum for the new constitution was approved in December 2004. In May 2005, Bozizé won presidential elections in a run-off vote.[12] In March 2013, Bozizé himself was overthrown by Michel Djotodia, a former civil servant and his armed militia, the Séléka. CAR has been under the guidance and instruction of France, the UN, and numerous

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[8] Chan, Stephen. *Grasping Africa A Tale of Tragedy and Achievement*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2007.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Mercereau, Benoît and Dhaneshwar. Ghura. *Political Instability and Growth The Central African Republic*. IMF Working Papers. Washington: International Monetary Fund, 2004.

[11] Chan, *Grasping Africa A Tale of Tragedy and Achievement*.

[12] Mercereau and Dhaneshwar, *Political Instability and Growth: The Central African Republic*.

regional organizations since the mid-1990s due to political instability and pockets of rebellions in the eastern part of the country.[13] Therefore, CAR's political and power culture is inherently competitive and unstable. This competition and its relationship to the power culture has created chronic insecurity which resulted in the ability to utilize violence to takeover governments.

CAR has continuously been contingent on aid and concession kickbacks, but the deterioration of the marginal private sector that existed until the 1980s has made this reliance nearly total. Despite that the concessionary system concluded years ago, concessionary politics have increased and spread in practice. Beforehand, concessions were chiefly approved for the extraction of natural resources, but now, due to foreign aid, all government privileges have been turned into concessions as well, resulting in the across-the-board outsourcing of CAR's sovereignty.[14]

This is significant because it contradicts the assumptions that motivate all international development aid. Development assistance and funding programs assume that the drive to govern is dormant, just not actualized due to non-existent human or material resources. However, that assumption is conflicting to the main recurring historical tendencies found in CAR's system of governance.[15] Due to the mixture of political insecurity and short funding cycles, neither Central African officials nor international aid representatives have the capacity to make substantial, effective long-term plans. More precisely, while the objectives are always distant and long-term for state-building, only short-term work is possible. An improved strategy for accountability inadequacies, and frustration for all the actors involved, could not be found.[16]

The long-term, sustainable vision of creating a functional state is an ideal that Central Africans hold. For CAR citizens, this vision is focused on a provision of entitlements. In contrast, the state they do have is focused on extraction from regular people, such as in the form

[13] Lombard, Louisa. *State of rebellion: violence and intervention in the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books, 2016: 9.

[14] Smith, Stephen W. 'The elite's road to riches in a poor country' in T. Carayannis and L. Lombard *Making Sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books: 110.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Lombard. *State of rebellion,* 10.

of crippling taxation that goes directly into government employees' pockets. There is a massive lack of faith in the government because the people see the officials as corrupt.[17]

While most of the country lacks a structured economy, businesspeople, mainly Muslims, from throughout the region have seen CAR as a place where there are opportunities to be successful.[18] For an assortment of reasons, the non-Muslim Central African population is not opening businesses. This allows many economic opportunities for Muslims and for foreigners that practice Islam. Almost all of the profitable market shops are owned and operated by Muslims.[19] Thus, CAR has seen high numbers of Muslim migration from neighboring states, such as Cameroon, Chad, and Nigeria. Non-Muslim Central Africans have been inviting these foreigners in, but remain apprehensive about losing their country's natural resources to them.[20]

Concerned with the material dispossession by foreigners, Central Africans have used this concern as the key factor in mobilizing nationalism. Central African identity is determined by speaking the regional language of Sango. As a result of the French colonization, Sango spread as way to communicate without interference. Sango is considered to be a symbol of Central African nationalism, and if one cannot speak it, then you will not be thought of as a true Central African.[21]

Religion is also an indicator of national identity. Due to colonial history, everything related to the state is related to Christianity and Bangui traditions, whereas Muslim symbols are considered "foreign and dangerous."[22] This leaves Muslim Central Africans disconnected to the country's sense of unity and cannot claim their nationality. Although they are not officially stateless, in effective terms they are often deprived of citizenship and/or otherwise characterized as suspicious.

However, there is a difference between Muslims with ties to West Africa and Muslims with familial connections to Chad and Sudan. Non-Muslim Central Africans determine those

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[17] Marchal, R. 'CAR and the regional (dis)order' in T. Caranyannis and L. Lombard *Making Sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books: 166.

[18] Kilembe, F. 'Local dynamics in the Pk5 district of Bangui' in T. Caranyannis and L. Lombard *Making Sense of the Central African Republic*. London: Zed Books: 76.

[19] Filakota, Richard. "Le renouveau islamique en Afrique noire, l'exemple de la Centrafrique." *Lumen Vitae Online,* 2009.

[20] Lombard. *State of rebellion,* 11.

[21] Diki-Kidiri, M. 'L'*émergence du sango comme langue nationale centrafricaine,*' Pédagogie et Culture 43: 36, 1979.

[22] Lombard. *State of rebellion,* 11.

connected to Chad and Sudan as particularly dangerous, for both long-term and short-term historical reasons. When Bozizé claimed the presidency in March 2003, a majority of his armed followers were Chadian or Darfur Muslims. These groups were voracious in achieving their goal and rewarding themselves for their work through violence, looting, etc. Furthermore, regional leaders and their governments both enthusiastically and inertly supported the forceful changes of authority in 2003 and 2013. This augmented Central Africans' sense of powerlessness and anxiety over the attrition of their sovereignty.[23]

1.2 Conflict Overview

In 1993, CAR held its first free elections. President Ange Felix Patasse won re-election in 1999. Being the country's first freely elected president, this gave Patasse a sense of political legitimacy and support from citizens. However, in 2003, Bozizé organized a coup with Libyan help and declared himself president. As a result, numerous rebellions arose in rural areas because of the undemocratic transition of power. These rebellions were contained and did not reach the capital. After some time, the network of privileged elites that were profiting from Bozize's government became narrower and centered on family members and the Evangelical Church.[24]

"Throughout the decade of *la Bozizie*, as Bozizé clientelistic mode of operating became known, CAR went through intentionally-led peacebuilding and state-building initiatives meant to address the ongoing rural rebellions by fostering inclusiveness."[25] This inclusiveness was present in name only because local and international actors realized they had little resources and means of addressing the rebellions.

The CAR citizens, international agents, diplomats, and other political and military actors became progressively frustrated with Bozizé regime. In March 2012, a few of these ostracized political elites and 'military entrepreneurs' organized a meeting in Niamey, Niger, and planned an overthrow. By December 2012, they formed an assorted rebel coalition composed of Chadian, Sudanese, and Central Africans, and a few other nationalities called the Séléka, or alliance in Sango. The Séléka consisted of mostly Muslims. Following this, the rebels took over Ndele, a

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[23] Ibid, 11-12.

[24] Vlavonou, Gino. "Understanding the 'failure' of the Séléka Rebellion." *African Security Review*, 2014: 2.

[25] Lombard. *State of rebellion*, 15.

northeastern town and then marched to Bangui. Regional governments and their leaders determined Séléka's motivation to take Bangui not to be a serious threat.[26]

Idriss Déby Itno, the president of Chad, sent extra soldiers to the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central African People (MICOPAX), which was operating as the sub-regional peacekeeping mission in the country. These soldiers were successful in preventing the Séléka from reaching the Damar line, which is 70 kilometers from Bangui. In early January 2013, Bozizé, leaders of the Séléka, and also select representatives from the civil society, met in Libreville, Gabon, for negotiations. These negotiations mostly consisted of peace talks. The regional leaders present previously determined both the agenda and the favored solutions before the negotiations took place. The solution proposed was quick and easy; it was not sustainable.[27]

In March 2013, the Séléka initiated a new advance toward Bangui. This time, the Chadian army did not intervene because of Séléka's military sophistication. CAR's army was rendered ineffective and subsequently, it dissolved. Séléka leader, Michel Djotodia, claimed that the capital was under their control. International organizations and governmental actors from the region and global community condemned the violent change of power, but no actor voiced enough concern to resolve the situation. Séléka's Djotodia cannot be considered a legitimate leader because he claimed power forcefully and in an undemocratic manner.[28]

Consequently, insecurity grew. Since the early days of the Séléka in late 2012, they had been controlling rural villages as fiefdoms. Extreme violence occurred on a massive scale including killings, dispossessions, etc. With the absence of Bozizé, Séléka rebels advanced towards the western and northern regions of the country. As their presence and territory expanded, there was little unity among the various armed groups that labeled themselves Séléka. Without an unified leadership, *ad hoc* violence and pillaging were their primary methods of obtaining control.[29]

Due to the security vacuum, embassies, humanitarian organizations, and the UN Integrated Peacebuilding support Office in CAR (BINUCA) withdrew their foreign staff from in late 2012 to early 2013. A select number of remaining diplomats and state politicians argued that

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[26] Ibid, 15.
[27] Tumutegyereize, K. and Nicolas Tillon. "Central African Republic: peace talks without the talks." *African Argumetns,* March 15, 2013.
[28] Vlavonou, Gino. "Understanding the 'failure' of the Séléka Rebellion."
[29] Mercereau and Dhaneshwar, *Political Instability and Growth: The Central African Republic*.

a well-armed and geographically dispersed peacekeeping presence would be needed to restore even the rather dire status quo, but the international and regional response was overall inert. Diplomats and donors expressed dismay from afar but were reluctant to resolve the problems in what they had come to a consider a repeatedly miserable mess.

Djotodia officially disbanded the Séléka in September 2013 because he lost control of the group. At the same time, Christian Central Africans began to militarize and mobilize against the Séléka. These militarized mobilizations were consistent with a tradition of self-defense groups throughout most of CAR.[30]

The group that mobilized as a response to the Séléka and their violent abuses was the anti-Balaka. The name derives from two common sources: the first is a reference to its initiation ceremonies, which members believed to make them impermeable to the Russian Kalashnikov bullets (*balles*-AK, or balaka). Secondly, balaka means machete in the regional language, Gbaya. This language is spoken in the area around Bozizé's home region of Bossangoa, and hence the anti-Balaka are those who counter the use of violence (machetes, etc.) against them and their kin.[31]

In September 2013, the anti-Balaka introduced a sectarian component to the upheaval. This dimension saw bilateral and international diplomatic agents begin to mobilize and advocate for a response, in the form of peacekeepers and humanitarian aid. The 'genocide card' was played by these actors when describing the violence that the anti-Balaka was committing against the Muslim population as revenge.[32] By playing the genocide card, it garnered the attention of the international community. It is the key foundation of influence when trying to mobilize interventions.[33]

In December 2013, this mobilization subsequently saw France deploy peacekeepers. The French mission, Sangaris, targeted the Séléka for disarmament, which caused these fighters to flee. Civilian Muslims that were protected by the Séléka were now vulnerable to anti-Balaka assaults. In January 2014, the African Union (AU) deployed their mission, the International

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[30] Giroux, Jennifer, David Lanz, and Damiano Sguaitamatti. *The Tormented Triangle: The Regionalisation of Conflict in Sudan, Chad, and the Central African Republic*. Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009.
[31] Lombard. *State of Rebellion*, 18.
[32] Gold, Danny, and Oakford, Samuel. "Allowing Another Rwanda." *The New York Times*, April 15, 2014.
[33] De Waal, Alex. "Playing the Genocide Card." *The New York Times*, December 19, 2013.

Support Mission to CAR (MISCA). These deployments of armed peacekeepers occurred during an intense violent period against Muslims. For example, on December 5, 2013, there was an extremely violent rampage in a Muslim neighborhood that resulted in looting, destroyed houses, and killings. In the west and center of CAR, there were thousands killed at this time. In 2014, when the highest levels of violence were seen, more than one million people, or 25 percent of the population, became displaced. These displaced populations either moved to other areas within CAR or fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Chad, and Cameroon.[34]

The presence of peacekeepers did not deter the widespread violence. President Déby intervened by calling the transitional government of CAR to Ndjamena in early January. The president persuaded Djotodia to resign from power. He introduced a process whereby the transitional government chose Catherine Samba-Panza as the new transitional president. Samba-Panza was an experienced lawyer, businesswoman, and a previous mayor of Bangui.[35]

In Bangui, the local population was frustrated with the peacekeeping operations, which they determined to be only concerned with protecting the government rather than protecting and preventing further violence against civilians in various neighborhoods.[36] The AU and French presence were visible in Bangui but their positioning was limited to main streets, even though most of the violence occurred near the residences and side streets.

An important factor that caused a negative perception of the AU intervention was the fact that a high percentage of their peacekeepers were from Cameroon, Chad, and the two Congos. Their countries were the first to be on the ground for the mission. The troops were stationed along their state's borders, which was a sensible approach operationally, but their proximity to their own countries saw their focus on their own countries and provided them with more commerce opportunities and other border trade activities. This supplemented the local population's suspicions that these soldiers were only in CAR for personal gain.[37]

In the early 2014, violence remained intense. On 29 March, an infamous incident occurred that saw the peacekeepers commit bloodshed. Although there is dispute over the exact

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[34] *"They Came to Kill': Escalating Atrocities in the Central African Republic*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2013.
[35] "Remarks With Central African Republic Transitional President Catherine Samba-Panza." *M2 Presswire* (Coventry), March 03, 2016.
[36] Cinq-Mars, E. *Too Little, Too Late: Failing to Prevent Atrocities in the Central African Republic*. New York: Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect, 2015.
[37] Lombard. *State of Rebellion*, 20.

events, a preliminary investigation by the UN Human Rights Office found Chadian soldiers to be guilty of killing thirty civilians and severely wounding approximately 300 when they fired upon a crowded market in Bangui. According to the report, the soldiers fired 'without any provocation.'[38] Interim President Samba-Panza criticized the violence and sought to reprimand those peacekeepers, whom she determined to be accountable. Consequently, President Déby instantly withdrew the Chadian peacekeepers.[39] Chadian troops should have exited CAR far earlier because of a great conflict of interest. A substantial number of the Séléka were former members of the Chadian military. Therefore, they were considered to be partial and accomplices for initiating the conflict.

At this time, France and other members of the international diplomatic elite sought support for a UN mission that would replace MISCA. There were many motivations for this advocacy. First, Central African representatives preferred the UN to the AU because of the mistrust and wariness of the African troops. Second, France believed a UN operation would allow them to slowly exit the conflict, diminishing their involvement. Their Sangaris operation was not supposed to last as long as it did and it was expensive, the daily expense being 800,000 Euros.[40]

On April 10, 2014, the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) was authorized under resolution 2149 due to "concerns with the security, humanitarian, human rights and political crisis in the Central African Republic and its regional implications."[41] The transition to MINUSCA lasted many months and officials arrived in CAR for the operation. Initially, these officials wanted to solve CAR's crisis with an innovative solution instead of following decisions made by prior peacebuilders. But, their proposals produced with the assistance from the interim government were extremely similar to previous ones. The literature of the proposals included topics such as "political dialogue; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; and free democratic elections."[42]

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[38] "Central African Republic: UN Says Chadian Soldiers Responsible for Deadly Bangui Attack." *Africa Renewal*, April 04, 2014.

[39] "CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: Chad Withdraws Troops." *Africa Research Bulletin: Political, Social and Cultural Series* 51, no. 4 (2014).

[40] Carayannis and Lombard. *Making Sense of the Central African Republic*.

[41] "United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)." United Nations. Available from: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusca/index.shtml.

[42] Lombard. *State of rebellion,* 20-21.

After the UN authorized their mission, the number of humanitarian organizations increased. Before the Séléka emerged, there were approximately 25 international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Their number grew to over a hundred by March 2016.[43] MINUSCA's mandate expanded to include humanitarian/civilian and military dimensions. Nonetheless, the violence continued despite the peacekeeper's presence and the troops had difficulty responding effectively.

The current authorization numbers provided by MINUSCA's website has 12,870 uniformed personnel. The breakdown of this number is 10,750 military personnel, including 489 Military Observers and Military Staff Officers and 2,080 police personnel. The police personnel includes 400 Individual Police Officers and 108 corrections officers. The site states 'an appropriate significant civilian component.'[44]

In late October 2016, France officially ended its Sangaris military operation. According to the French Defense Minister Jean Yves Le Drian, the Sangaris mission was successful in protecting civilian populations and preventing fighting.[45] However, not many of the French achievements were sustainable and they were accused of protecting the anti-Balaka. Also, there have been allegations of sexual abuses and rape by French soldiers, which will be mentioned in the justice section of the thesis.

1.3 Religious or Political Conflict?

Christian elites have exploited the idea that the Christian majority is superior to the Muslim minority and that narrative has fueled the constant discrimination of Muslims. The leaders of the Christian and Muslim communities have characterized post-independent CAR to be a period of harmony between the religions. However, multiple documentaries that have interviewed those Muslims fleeing from the anti-Balaka have described their relationship with the Christian majority as full of discrimination and it has been that way for decades. The Christians have questioned the authenticity of the Muslim's Central African identity. In the early 1980s, Muslims faced difficulty when attempting to obtain state recognition for their

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[43] Picco, Enrica. "From being forgotten to being ignored: international humanitarian interventions in the Central African Republic." *Dialnet,* 2015.

[44] http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusca/facts.shtml

[45] "France ends Sangaris military operation in CAR." *BBC News: Africa*. October 31, 2016.

organizations. In the 1990s, a *modus vivendi* was agreed upon by the communities.[46] The historic image of CAR as a nation on the frontline of a Christian sub-Saharan Africa facing the Muslim North provided the government's unwillingness to recognize Muslim organizations. Christians still refer to the pre-colonial period that saw their religion threatened by ruling sultans. Some Christians believe that CAR is the target of an 'Islamization plan' that has been supported by their Muslim neighbors, Sudan, Chad, and Libya. This conspiracy nourished this feature of CAR's political climate.[47]

Bozizé and his followers revitalized this underlying fear of Islamization when the Séléka was advancing towards Bangui in December 2012. They spurred counter action by calling the Séléka "Muslim invaders."[48] This anti-Islam rhetoric was widely accepted and spread throughout the western provinces. These provinces were the location where the Séléka committed many mass atrocities in 2013 and this created the conditions that inspired deadly religious prejudice and incited the establishment of the anti-Balaka.[49]

By early 2014, this discourse took hold and the conflict came to the point of including not only the armed groups but also civilians. A popular movement rejecting the Séléka emerged in northwestern Ouham and Ouham-Pende prefectures. It took up arms with support from former members of the army and decided to retake Bangui. In early 2014, Bangui residents and the west considered this ethnic-regional movement to be patriotic and framed their goals in ruthless pseudo-religious and nationalist terms: "hunt down Séléka and their Muslim supporters, who are not Central African and who are trying to forcibly Islamize the country."[50]

After the Djotodia's fall, the non-Muslim majority held all Muslims responsible for the violence committed under its rule by association. The perception of the Muslim community's complicity with the Séléka was so widespread that in early 2014, there was a wave of anti-Muslim violence that caused significant population displacement and created Muslim enclaves in

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[46] Filakota. "Le renouveau islamique en Afrique noire, l'exemple de la Centrafrique."

[47] Ngoupandé, Jean-Paul. *L'Afrique Face À L'islam : Comprende la crise centrafricaine*. Paris: Michel, 2014.

[48] "Refugees Struggle to Get by as New Dangers Arise in CAR Conflict [analysis]." *All Africa*, November 19, 2014.

[49] Ibid.

[50] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

western cities. In December, the UN estimated the number of refugees at 452,000 and the number of internally displaced persons (IDP's) at 447,000.[51]

In 2014, the Séléka leadership claimed their group was needed to defend and protect Muslims and created a solution to divide the country. In July 2014, the partitioning idea was presented by Séléka's representatives at the Brazzaville negotiations; this will be discussed later. Séléka leaders persisted with their cause of defending Muslims as a way to mobilize support and strengthen their publicity efforts.[52]

Both external actors and local Central Africans have seen and depicted the crisis through a religious lens. The international media and news agencies have reported the conflict as a religious war. At the Bangui Form, which is discussed later, the participants described the crisis as a "political conflict with a religious dimension."[53] But this is not universally accepted because a significant percentage of the civilians consider it to be solely a religious conflict. The term community is used to describe religious communities. Due to the research, I have come to the conclusion that the conflict started as a political crisis that turned more violent as the religious element spread.

1.4 'Ethnic Cleansing'

The development of the term 'ethnic cleansing' emerged in the context of the Yugoslavian conflict in the 1990s and has thought to be a translation from a Serbian and Croatian expression. Because ethnic cleansing is independent of genocide in international law, there is no exact definition or criteria. A UN Commission of Experts mandated to investigate international humanitarian law violations committed in Yugoslavia provided a definition of ethnic cleansing in their final report, "a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas."[54] The Commission of Experts also detailed that the forcible methods used to remove civilian populations can include "murder, torture,

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[51] http://data.unhcr.org/car/regional.php.

[52] Whiting, Alex. "The dangers of oversimplifying the Central African Republic Conflict." *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, September 27, 2014.

[53] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

[54] UN Document S/1994/674, May 27, 1994.

arbitrary arrest and detention, extrajudicial executions, rape and sexual assaults, severe physical injury to civilians, confinement of civilian population in ghetto areas."[55]

After the Séléka overthrew Bozizé, Djotodia suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament in March 2013 and assumed the presidency in August 2013. During this period, the Séléka was violently attacking Christians. As a response, the anti-Balaka militia harshly retaliated by brutally killing thousands of Muslims and forced thousands from their homes. The fighting began in September 2013 and escalated when the anti-Balaka forces attacked Bangui's Muslim neighborhoods on December 5, 2013. This ignited fighting on a broader scale. After a backlash from the international community due to his forced path to power and his inability to stop the fighting after he dissolved the Séléka coalition, Djotodia resigned in January 2014. The Séléka continued fighting which resulted in the members of the coalition forming armed political parties.[56]

In December 2014, the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic (COI) issued a report finding a "pattern of ethnic cleansing committed by anti-Balaka in the areas in which Muslims had been living."[57] In early January 2014, the anti-Balaka emptied CAR's western and northwestern villages of Muslims. The anti-Balaka was reported to even kill fleeing Muslims, including those in humanitarian-assisted evacuation convoys. The UN reported that in 2014, 99 percent of Muslim residents in Bangui fled, 80 percent of CAR's Muslim population fled to Cameroon or Chad (which was estimated to be around 15 percent of the population at the beginning of the conflict), and 417 out of 436 mosques were destroyed.[58] Amnesty International has described this assault as a "Muslim exodus of historic proportions."[59]

Chapter 2: Peacebuilding Initiatives

2.1 Definitions and Literature Review

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[55] Shraga, Daphna, and Ralph Zacklin. "The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia." *European Journal of International Law* 5, no. 1: 366.

[56]"Central African Republic: Erased Identity: Muslims in Ethnically Cleansed Areas of the Central African Republic." *Amnesty International*, July 31, 2015.

[57] Laduba, Patryk. "What Lies Beneath the 'G' Word? Genocide-Labelling and Fact-Finding at UN." *Blog of the European Journal of International Law*, May 28, 2015.

[58] Annual Report, 2017. U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, found at http://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/CentralAfricanRepublic.2017.pdf

[59] Jones, Sam. "UN finds 'ample evidence' of war crimes committed in Central African Republic." The Guardian, June 6 2014.

The most recent definition provided by the UN was in 2007 as delivered by the Secretary-General's Policy Committee: "a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives."[60]

According to the UN Peacebuilding Fund website, the Secretary-General organized his peacebuilding strategy in three official 2009 reports, which listed five recurrent priority areas for international assistance: 1. Support to basic safety and security; 2. Political processes; 3. Provision for basic services; 4. Restoration of core government functions; 5. Economic revitalization.[61] The Secretary-General Panel Committee's 2012 report suggested that the UN and other international partners have to take on more action in order to ensure that states emerging from violence have their own capacity to contain and respond to their conflict and encourage sustainable peace. The report identified "inclusivity, institution building and sustained international support, as critical actions in preventing relapse into violence and producing more resilient societies. Successful peacebuilding processes must be transformative, creating space for a wider set of actors including women, youth, marginalized groups, civil society, and the private sector-to participate in national post-conflict decision-making."[62]

When considering the concept of building state institutions, the report states that the public sector and social services must deliver justifiable and responsible reactions when responding to the grievances of a population in order to rebuild the country's legitimacy. The 2012 report focuses on the UN's experiences and lessons learnt from peacebuilding operations. It also reflects on discussions regarding expanding policy to include all the actors and stakeholders involved in peacebuilding.[63]

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[60] Decision of the Secretary-General. UN Peacebuilding Support Office, May 2007.

[61] UN Document A/63/881-S/2009/304, "Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict,"11 June 2009, para 17.

[62] United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, 2.1: *Definitions and Policy Development*.

[63] "The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States." Available from: http://www.newdeal4peace.org/.

The UN has provided an overall general framework for its peacebuilding objectives and activities. The peacebuilding programs are "strategic, prioritized interventions driven by the analysis of peace and conflict that address underlying causes or drivers and consequences of conflict."[64] According to the UN, their programs create strong peace agreements and build confidence in the transition period by contributing to the restoration of social services and encouraging societal unity. This could include facilitation of activities that promote participation and inclusivity in politics, creating a dialogue and reconciliation efforts, or enhance accessibility to human security and justice.

'Peace dividends' could be included in peacebuilding programs. 'Peace dividends' means having concrete results of the peacebuilding operations that are preferably conducted by the state and they can be accessible to their citizens. Another method is the creation of incentives to promote non-violent behavior. This will decrease fear and anxiety amongst the communities and initiate a process of installing trust in the state institutions and the wider process of establishing peace. The government, public, and social services can address the underlying tensions and grievances of the people, which has the possibility to resurface and spur more violence. When the public administration conducts itself in this frame, it provides a platform to strengthen its legitimacy and accountability systems.[65]

The UN definitions usually refer to peacebuilding in post-conflict situations. CAR's conflict is still ongoing but has made strides for peace. There are a number of peacebuilding operations being conducted by state and non-state actors. The 2015 and 2016 general elections were relatively peaceful and that demonstrated that there has been glimmers of stability and peace but simultaneously there are pockets of violence in certain regions in the country. Therefore, UN definitions of peacebuilding limits CAR's context.

It is difficult to measure when a conflict can transition to the post stage. Peace as defined by Patricia Daley is a "process as opposed to just an abrupt end to conflict."[66] Consequently, Daley's definition logically applies to CAR's conflict. "It is common knowledge that for a peace

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Daley, Patricia. "Challenges to Peace: Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region of Africa." *Third World Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (2006): 303.

process to end war, it should be founded upon certain principles such as broad-based transitional government, demobilization, and reform of the national security apparatus."[67]

This section reviews the academic literature on the conduct and concept of internationally-led peacebuilding. The notion of peacebuilding has gained attention and prevalence due to its rise in the 1990s and 2000s. This increased trend can be demonstrated by the high numbers of operations conducted by UN or regional organizations. There has been a growth in external and foreign actors present in conflict areas, frequently located in Africa. These actors operate "to support, to implement, to aid and assist, to monitor, or to enforce peace."[68] Although, main components of peacebuilding have "become standardized, "tool boxed," mainstreamed and institutionalized, mainly at the level of international organizations and major donors who became the central nodes of what has been the international peacebuilding regime."[69]

The growth and expansion of international peacebuilding have created critiques in the academic world due to the concept's ethical foundations, debating the underlying premises and sociopolitical practices of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding became a standard operational process and created a structuralized international engagement field. This is contested because "peacebuilding is understood as a set of controversial universalized norms which is related to other contested norms of international politics, (e.g. "responsibility to protect) and is embedded in concepts of a Western-dominated international order."[70]

The key argument is that the standardized global peacebuilding concept is unavoidably paternalistic because it is most likely facilitated by agents who claim that they know what is best for war-torn populations. External actors have to adhere to their 'superior' preconceived recipes for creating stability and peace. This method of 'care and control' seems to be a major

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[67] Nyiayanna, Kialee. "Arming Community Vigilantes in the Niger Delate: Impliations for Peacebuilding" in Lahai John Idriss, and Tanya Lyons. *African Frontiers : Insurgency, Governance and Peacebuilding in Postcolonial States*. The Ashgate Plus Series in International Relations and Politics. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015.

[68] Debiel, Tobias, Thomas Held, and Ulrich Schneckener. *Peacebuilding in Crisis: Rethinking Paradigms and Practices of Transnational Cooperation*. Routledge Global Cooperation Series. 2016.

[69] Suhrke, Berdal, Suhrke, Astri, and Berdal, Mats R. *The Peace in between : Post-war Violence and Peacebuilding*. Studies in Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding; 2. London [etc.]: Routledge, 2012.

[70] Debiel, Held, and Schneckener. *Peacebuilding in Crisis : Rethinking Paradigms and Practices of Transnational Cooperation*.

characterization and inevitable feature of peacebuilding.[71] Critics have described international peacebuilding projects as "neo-colonial, Eurocentric, securitized or paternalistic."[72]

According to Paffenholz, peace relies on a civil society that is fortified and vibrant; peacebuilding requires mobilization and empowerment of the civil society and motivate political participation of the broader society.[73] Peacebuilding must include state and institution building because without these administrative structures, the process will fail. The process requires a peaceful and civil society where public order and stability can be seen.[74]

Various studies indicate that internationally-led peacebuilding operations, most notably those that have a peacekeeping presence, have the capacity to reduce violence and facilitate negotiations between the conflicting parties. There is a popular belief that assistance from the international community makes a significant difference. According to Doyle and Sambanis, the likelihood of success is dependent on the interplay of three main conditions which incorporate a "peacebuilding triangle": the degree of aggression of the parties, the extent of local actor's capacities after the conflict, and the magnitude of international assistance. Their main argument is "the deeper the hostility, the more the destruction of local capacities, the more one needs international assistance to succeed in establishing a stable peace."[75]

Therefore, Doyle and Sambanis suggest that the more violent a conflict is, the more international initiatives are needed to facilitate sustainable peacebuilding. However, there are limitations to this formula. The design underestimates the magnitude of peacebuilding operations and the fact that more complex tasks and activities are required. More outside actors have to be involved. "Inevitably, the result is an increasing number of context-related or actor-related factors which makes it extremely difficult to identify those explaining variables and casual links responsible for success or failure of peacebuilding."[76]

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Sabaratnam, Meera. "Challenges to Peacebuilding: Managing Spoilers during Conflict Resolution." *Millennium-Journal Of International Studies* 36, no. 1 (2007): 169.

[73] Richmond, Oliver, and Thania Paffenholz. "Civil Society and Peacebuilding." *International Peacekeeping* 18, no. 4 (2011): 485.

[74] Schwarz, Rolf, Keith Krause, Oliver Jütersonke, Neil Cooper, Achim Wennmann, Béatrice Pouligny, Rama Mani, Robert Rubinstein, and Jürgen Rüland. "Post-conflict Peacebuilding: Security, Welfare and Representation." *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (2005): 435.

[75] Doyle, Michael W., and Nicholas. Sambanis. *Making War and Building Peace United Nations Peace Operations*. Princeton Paperbacks Making War and Building Peace. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011: 4.

[76] Schröder. "Gauging the Effectiveness of Post-Conflict Peace and State Building," 228-230.

The academic literature on peacebuilding practices lacks universality because it is written from the perspective of external actors. Reflecting on it, the content is largely focused on success and failure, operations, and problems. The local actors' role is touched upon but it is merely discussed as an intervening or contextual variable in which to demonstrate and explain the results of peacebuilding practices. Most research and studies are one dimensional because they discuss peacebuilding as a transfer of skills and resources from external actors to locals and ultimately ask how this transformation can be improved to ensure success.

From this viewpoint, the concept of local ownership, a notion created by donors, can be seen as an "enabling factor to make the medicine go down."[77] Oddly, local ownership is an element in peacebuilding practices, which implies that ownership does not necessarily exist but requires approval, justification, and support by outside actors.

2.2 Prior Peace Treaties

Before the ousting of President Bozizé, a peace deal was signed between him and the Séléka alliance during negotiations with the parties representing the government and the rebellion. Briefly mentioned earlier in the text, these peace talks were held in Libreville and a ceasefire treaty was signed on January 11, 2013. CAR's neighbors mediated the talks and attempted to prevent stability threats and Bozizé's government. Séléka's delegation required a list of demands that were included in the treaty: the release of political prisoners that opposed the government and the withdrawal of the majority of foreign troops deployed in CAR to strengthen and support the domestic military.

The deal called for a transitional government and a parliamentary election to be scheduled within a year in order to form a new national assembly. A significant component was that the transitional government was to be selected from the opposition. However, the parties present at the meeting agreed that Bozizé would stay in power and the opposition would be in the position of Prime Minister and have full executive power.

The head of the UN Integration Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA), Margaret Vogt, reported that a "government of national unity would be established" as a result of the peace treaty and it was a great precedent "to prevent (CAR) from falling down a

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[77] Debiel, Held, and Schneckener. *Peacebuilding in Crisis : Rethinking Paradigms and Practices of Transnational Cooperation*.

slippery slope."[78] Vogt praised her diplomatic efforts that resulted in a peace talk that included all parties involved, even though there were high levels of skepticism and criticism that the talks lacked legitimacy. Vogt updated the UN Security Council on the peace treaty and the international community must be more forcefully involved by means of diplomacy and funds in order to save CAR. The then UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon had designated the conflict to be on the same level of Mali, Somalia, and Syria.[79] This Libreville peace treaty failed. After its signing, more violence broke out and the Séléka rebel coalition overthrew Bozizé.

The next ceasefire agreement signed between the armed groups occurred on July 23, 2014. Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza, alongside other regional leaders, Congolese President Denis Sassou Nguesso and Chandian Prime Minister Kalzeubt Pahimi Deubt delegated a ceasefire agreement that had the key representatives from all parties present at a conference hosted in the Republic of the Congo's capital Brazzaville. The delegation resulted in an agreed 'tentative ceasefire.' The agreement was signed by both representatives of the anti-Balaka and Séléka forces. The agreement declared that a termination of violence would "take effect in the entire territory of CAR."[80] The peace talks were aimed at achieving an agreement that disarmed the groups and demobilized the militia forces.

At this point, thousands of civilians were killed in the conflict and around 25 percent of the country's population was displaced.[81] Following this conference, Mahamat Kamoun was selected to be the first Muslim leader to guide the transitional government in August 2014 but this was rejected by Séléka rebels. They did not approve because Kamoun was not a member of Séléka's rebellion, even though he was the head of the tax agency during Djotodia's time in power. Captain Ibrahim Nedjad, a Séléka spokesman, declared that the Séléka leadership nevertheless supported and were committed to the peace accord.[82]

Another peace agreement was made between former leaders in April 2015. Djotodia and Bozizé conducted peace agreement talks in Nairobi, Kenya, without the presence or representation of the interim government. Therefore, the deal was surrounded by illegitimate

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[78] SC/10879. *Agreements Signed Today in Libreville to Halt Recent Rebellion in Central African Republic, Provide Map for Political Transition, Security Council Told. UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,* January 11, 2013.
[79] Dabany, Jean Rovys. "Central African Republic signs peace deals with rebels." *Reuters,* January 11, 2013.
[80] Ibid.
[81] "CAR armed groups sign ceasefire agreement." *Agence France-Presse,* July 25, 2014.
[82] "Central African Republic crisis: Rebels reject new Muslim PM Kamoun." *BBC News Africa*, August 11, 2014.

peace treaty claims. The goal of the agreement was to reaffirm the 2014 treaty. The agreement was signed after months of discussions according to Kenya's president Uhuru Kenyatta. Media and new agencies described the deal as meaningless and the specifics of the negotiations were not publicly released. However, Bozizé's speech commenting on the talks expressed his commitment to "real peace through reconciliation."[83]

The Bangui National Forum was a six day national conference held in early May 2015 presided by Professor Abdoulaye Bathily, the then Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for CAR. Religious-based organizations, government representatives, civilians, political parties, and members of the media were present for the conference. With this representation, which was numbered around 600 people, resulted in the communities having their priorities voiced in the peacebuilding process.[84] The Forum had a sense of legitimacy because it was composed of various parties.

The conference ended with the then transitional government signing an agreement with ten different armed groups. This May 10 agreement included disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). It detailed the adoption of an agreement on peace, reconstruction, and reconciliation.[85] This declaration of principles, known as the Republican Pact, was approved by the majority of the participants on a wide range of issues. The principals were composed of an electoral process, principles for the new constitution, redeployment of civil servants, restoration of basic services, the immediate implementation of DDR, the creation of a mixed tribunal and a truth and reconciliation commission, the need for transitional justice and an integrated national development strategy.[86] It also recommended that Muslim holidays be given official status, a longstanding demand of the Muslim community.[87]

However, the Forum did not have a concrete and clear implementation procedure. Another issue was the lack of financial support to make these resolutions a reality. Therefore, although it was a significant endeavor to include various representatives of the population affected by the conflict, the results have not had a substantial impact on developing security or

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[83] "Former CAR leaders sign 'meaningless' peace agreement." *AlJazeera,* April 14, 2015.

[84] 'Central African Republic peace: The Bangui Forum.' *Reliefweb*, May 7, 2015.

[85] "Ban welcomes Central African Republic peace pact as reflection of people's aspriations." *UN News Centre,* May 11, 2015.

[86] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

[87] Filakota. "Le renouveau islamique en Afrique noire, l'exemple de la Centrafrique."

progress in CAR's institutions. The parties that settled on the agreement did not follow through with their resolutions; fighting continued and the transitional government was not able to consolidate support.[88]

In 2015, Samba-Panza's government attempted to reestablish state authority and legitimacy across CAR's territory as a part of the peacebuilding efforts by deploying civil servants to the provinces in order to restore state visibility in rural areas. This process was organized by the office of the Prime Minister and local administration departments. Although the government, civil society members, and international partners agree that local authorities have to play an important role in promoting harmony and easing tensions, there is little clarity as to what they can contribute and their capacity is unclear. The newly appointed local civil administrators are establishing themselves in their new positions and are currently in a dangerous situation, particularly when considering the political insecurity. Questions and doubts concerning these actors' impartiality were raised when considering their peacebuilding roles. Trainings conducted by local and international experts and resources would be obligatory in order to turn the civil administrators into operational peacebuilders.[89]

2.3 2015-2016 General Elections

One important impact of the Forum was the call for a referendum on a new constitution and general elections. On December 13, 2015, CAR held a constitutional referendum in order to stabilize the country. Despite the sound of gunfire in the morning in some Bangui neighborhoods, polling stations opened and Central African citizens were able to do their civic responsibility. Marie-Madeleine N'kouet Hoornaert, president of CAR's National Authority for Elections (ANE) stated: "the people of CAR have realized that the political process should be forged through the ballot box and the democracy is the only laudable and honorable path for emerging from the crisis."[90] The citizens who commented on the referendum saw it as a glimmer of hope and an opportunity to achieve peace and order by establishing a new constitution.

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[88] "CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: Bangui Forum." Africa Research Bulletin: Political, Social and Cultural Series 52, no. 5 (2015): 20571A-0571C.

[89] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

[90] *Central African Republic holds constitutional referendum.* United Nations Development Programme. December 14, 2015.

The success of organizing and holding a constitutional referendum in CAR is an incredible achievement due to the fighting and insecurity. The crisis weakened and challenged any sustainable developmental efforts. To assist with the facilitation and financing of elections, multiple partners made donations to the "common basket of funds" to support the election process. An integrated collaboration composed of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), MINUSCA, UN WOMEN, the Republic of Congo, Luxembourg, Morocco, Japan, Italy, France, United States, the AU, and the European Union (EU), contributed technical and financial advice and support to CAR's ANE.

The UNDP provided the ANE with trainings and management for the staff of polling stations, and also procured and transported election equipment. Aurélien Agbénonci, the representative resident of the UNDP described the challenge of holding an election at a sensitive time but the signing of the candidates and political parties' Code of Conduct by the entire political class demonstrated the electoral process' success.[91]

With the approval of the referendum, CAR proceeded to hold presidential and legislative elections on December 30, 2015, in order to encourage further peace efforts. Because no presidential candidate obtained the required 50 percent of the majority vote and the Transitional Constitutional Court voided the National Assembly election results due to irregularities, a secondary round of presidential elections and a new parliamentary vote occurred on February 14, 2016, with run-offs held on March 31, 2016.[92],[93]

A noteworthy achievement during these elections was that thousands of refugees were able to vote in the elections. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that its staff facilitated the election process outside of CAR. They stated that their role in the election was purely humanitarian, there were no political agendas involved. Refugees that were eligible to vote in the Republic of Congo, Chad, and Cameroon were able to participate. The refugees hoped that with this election, they could return back to a peaceful CAR. UNHCR Africa Director Valentin Tapsoba stated that "this election, including the participation of refugees, is a pivotal event in the tragic recent history of the Central African Republic, reflecting

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Sokambi, Slyvestre. 'Centrafrique: Le corps électoral convoqué le 14 février pour le 1er tour des législatives et le second tour de la présidentielle.' *Réseau Des Journalistes Pour Les Droits De L'Homme,* January 28, 2016.

[93] "New Central African president takes on a country in ruins," *ENCA.com*, March 28, 2016.

a collective will to move on and rebuild a country with strong government, security, rule of law, inter-communal harmony and economic growth."[94] The fact that CAR refugees living outside of the country were able to participate in this momentous event was significant because it provided a sense of inclusion and patriotism, to be able to vote would possibly end the reason they had to leave their homes in the first place.

Faustin-Archange Touadéra, a former Prime Minister under Bozizé, was elected as president in the run-offs by receiving 63 percent of the votes. The voter turnout for the legislative and presidential elections was estimated at around 61 percent according to electoral officials. Touadéra was the candidate focused on security and completely ending the violent fighting. The people viewed him as the leader who can bring peace and help heal the divide between the rivaling communities because he is not connected to either of the warring groups. He also campaigned on expanding and increasing economic activity.[95]

When Touadéra was sworn into office, he promised to deliver disarmament and "make CAR a united country, a country of peace, a country facing development."[96] Touadér's new government included three presidential candidates that ran in the first round of the elections. Several ministers that had served in Bozizé's government joined. It can be argued that these ministers were selected because of their previous experience with the new President and not due to their professional relationships to Bozizé. It is important to note that the new government does not to have any Séléka nor anti-Balaka representatives.[97]

2.4 International Organizations' Roles

MINUSCA's Civil Affairs Unit

According to MINUSCA's official website, "the civil affairs team within MINUSCA focuses on providing support to local-level efforts and bottom-up approaches to protection, political dialogue and the promotion of social cohesion, as well as the extension of state authority throughout the Central African Republic, in support to the national and local authorities and in

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[94] Dobbs, Leo. "Thousands of refugees vote in second round of CAR presidential election." UNHCR-The UN Refugee Agency, February 15, 2016.

[95] "CAR presidential election: Faustin Touadéra declared winner." *BBC News Africa*, February 20, 2016.

[96] "Central African Republic's president vows peace, reforms at inauguration." *Reuters*, March 30, 2016.

[97] Duhem, Vincent. "Centrafrique: ce qu'il faut retenir du nouveau gouvernement dévoilé par Toudéra." *Jeune Afrique*, April 13, 2016.

conjunction with the United Nations Country Team."[98] The Civil Affairs element arranges local level engagement to develop networks to ensure that the mission is accessible. The unit plays a role in supporting cohesion among the components of the mission and external actors. They act as a connection between emergency relief and processes of stabilization. There are three primary work areas. First, 'protection and community liaison: liaison with authorities and communities on their protection needs, to include the establishment of alert networks and protection plans.' Second, 'community dialogue and social cohesion: social cohesion, conflict resolution, support to civil society organizations and confidence building, including outreach activities. Thirdly, 'restoration of state authority: support to the deployment of territorial administration and restoration of state authority, preservation of territorial integrity, and strengthening of administrative and social services delivery at the local level.'[99]

International Non-Governmental Organizations

INGOs responded quickly in order to support, supplement and widen various peacebuilding initiatives. Some INGOs that are currently operating in CAR include the Danish Refugee Council, Merc Corps, Catholic Relief Services, Fin Church Aid, Cordaid, Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, and Search for Common Ground. Their initiatives are supporting and training local peace committees, media support, peacebuilding modules education, medical care, reviving the local economy, reconciliation sports, and arts. Multiple peacebuilding organizations and the humanitarian aid agencies have created programs aimed at social cohesion in order to build trust between the communities. This is done by joint activities, particularly community development projects, labor-intensive construction projects and sporting and musical events.

However, these initiatives lack complementary conflict transformation exercises, where divided communities could examine the causes and sources of the conflict and violence and commit to non-violent dispute resolution.

Several NGOs have focused on the importance of developing youth programs. Because the youth has been considered to be the main aggressor due to armed group participation, training programs can help stabilize and prevent crime. The Danish Refugee Council and

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[98] MINUSCA: Civil Affairs Unit. Available from: https://minusca.unmissions.org/en/civil-affairs
[99] Ibid.

Norwegian Refugee Council have aimed to teach basic skills so that young people can start their own businesses as a skilled workers. This incentivizes the youth to continue with employment rather than join an armed group. These programs have been popular because they help those individuals that did not have the opportunity to receive a formal education.[100]

2.5 Religious Leaders

Leaders of both the Muslim and Christian communities have participated in the peacebuilding efforts at all levels. The religious leaders have used their influence to protect vulnerable populations and have prevented attacks. Religious leaders have an extremely crucial role to play in promoting peace. They have facilitated ecumenical prayers and joint Christian and Muslim celebrations in order to encourage coexistence and religious tolerance.[101]

The heads of the three principal religious communities in CAR, Imam Oumar Kobin Layama, the Catholic Archbishop Dieudonné Nzapalainga and Reverend Nicolas Guerekoyame-Gbangou of the Evangelical Alliance, created an inter-religious platform soon after the crisis broke out. They collaborated in their calls for a ceasefire and peace. They have played major roles domestically and internationally when organizing reconciliation agendas for international actors, such as the UN, EU, United States, and France. Their teamwork has become a symbol of religious coexistence.[102]

After the violence that was seen in September 2015, Layama, Nzapalainga, and Guerekoyame-Gbangou suffered a decrease in power and influence but proceeded with their commitments to end the violence. They have been threatened and physically targeted by those who oppose their promotion of peace. The visit by Pope Francis in November 2015 strengthened the influence of the religious leaders by having the leader of the Catholic Church assist them in their message. The Pope advocated for peace between the Christians and Muslims.[103]

In some remote villages, some priests have taken the role of *ad hoc* mediators to protect Muslim civilians that are at risk. These mediation efforts derived from the fact that Muslims

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[100] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

[101] "Religious Leaders Dialogue on the Central African Republic." *M2 Presswire*, January 08, 2014.

[102] "Analysis of conflict and peacebuilding in the Central African Republic."

[103] Rocca, Francis. "Pope Calls for End to Religious Violence at Central African Republic Mosque; Visits Area in Bangui Sheltering Muslims Fleeing Violence by Christian Militias." *Wall Street Journal* (New York), November 30, 2015.

victimized by the anti-Balaka often were able to seek refuge in churches. Priests were in the position of being involved and became natural mediators in the districts where the anti-Balaka and their supporters surrounded Muslims. At the height of the violence committed against Muslims in early 2014, some priests provided protection to Muslims by hiding them from anti-Balaka rage in their churches. Christian and Muslim leaders have participated and organized peace conferences and committees.[104]

Chapter 3: Humanitarianism

3.1 Theory

The modern humanitarianism theory developed after the end of the Cold War and was implemented in the new international order system. According to Michael Barnett, the broad definition of humanitarianism is the "desire to relieve the suffering of distant strangers."[105] Humanitarianism emerged in a widespread manner when organizations structured the "idea of providing to those in immediate danger, reducing the suffering of the masses, and eliminating causes of harm."[106] These actions must be done impartially and independently. The establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the development of international humanitarian law encouraged the institutionalization of humanitarianism in international and domestic organizations.

In the post-Cold War world system, humanitarianism has become politicized. Humanitarian organizations realize that humanitarian is the offspring of politics, that their policies and operations have political consequences, and they are inevitable components of the political world. However, humanitarian agencies have held the belief that humanitarian action and politics are separate, they can act independently from politics, and that they have been striving for this separation.[107]

The basic principle of humanitarian action, alleviating suffering, is based on humanity, not on politics. But since its politicization, humanitarian agencies have integrated human rights,

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[104] "Muslim Leaders From Central African Republic Meet At Kaiciid to Plan Cooperation for Post-Conflict Reconciliation." *All Africa*, August 28, 2015.

[105] Barnett, Michael. "Evolution Without Progress? Humanitarianism in a World of Hurt." *International Organization* 63, no. 4 (2009): 622.

[106] Ibid, 623.

[107] Ibid.

promotion of democracy, and state-building in their platforms. Therefore, the humanitarian sector, which was originally based on independence from politics, is now a part of the political system. Although some academics consider that this politicization of humanitarianism has shifted the field into a "golden age" because there is more funding, more support, and more organization in regards to saving suffering populations, this a minority position.[108] Instead, most are concerned that the politicization has stained humanitarianism because of ethical concerns.

For the purpose of this thesis, it is important to discuss the connection of humanitarianism to peacebuilding processes. "Efforts to reconcile humanitarian action and peacebuilding on the ground especially during complex humanitarian emergencies are fought and tensions and challenges."[109] These challenges include definitional and operational issues, particularly the various competing structures and agendas.

A major challenge derives from the lack of transparency in the humanitarian community and what peacebuilding is and what its method of delivery is. Humanitarians determine peacebuilding to be a political process. This perspective means it is difficult for humanitarians to participate in peacebuilding efforts because of their principles require them to be neutral. Although, the current peacebuilding processes in various conflict areas incorporate humanitarian agencies when facilitating their operations. They are also politicized because many organizations are funded by state governments, therefore they are required to adhere to their donor's stipulations, which may be political.

Peacebuilding is an all-encompassing and integrated strategy that is composed of various features, from politics, development to humanitarian and human rights programs and mechanisms. Peacebuilding a long and resource consuming process that occurs at multiple levels: the local, mid-level, and political level. Moreover, "the objective of peacebuilding is comprehensive and goes beyond ensuring the cessation of not only physical violence, but also structural violence caused by deep rooted cultural and institutional frameworks."[110] Peacebuilding strives to end armed conflict while simultaneously attempting to resolve the conflict's root causes with creating peace.

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[108] Slim, Hugo. "Aid in Danger: The Perils and Promise of Humanitarianism." *International Affairs* 91, no. 3 (2015): 629-31.
[109] "Exploring the nexus between peacebuilding and humanitarianism: Opportunities & Challenges." Horn of Africa Regional Program (HARP), Life & Peace Institute.
[110] Ibid.

When investigating the concurrence of humanitarianism and peacebuilding, there is a principle that both ideas share: preserving humanity. Furthermore, peacebuilding and humanitarian action both strive to create societal resilience in order develop local and national actors so that they have the ability to confront the current crisis and thwart off future conflicts. In this manner, the connection between the two principles is strengthened where humanitarians respond to the population's needs, while peacebuilders strive to prevent more violence, which consequently can further exacerbate the humanitarian crisis. The root of peacebuilding and humanitarianism's mandates are essentially the same because both want to protect and end suffering.

3.2 Applying Humanitarianism to CAR

By applying the theoretical framework of humanitarianism, one can conceptualize the Central African crisis. Since CAR has experienced political and societal turbulence and instability, many international actors have utilized the politicized humanitarianism theory in order to facilitate CAR's statehood. The major political crisis and the forceful transitions of governments have resulted in a conflict that saw the presence of humanitarian organizations alongside state and peacebuilding agencies.

The humanitarian lens calls for an assistance to ending the population's suffering. Humanitarian actors were needed to respond to the brutal scenes of violence conducted by the armed groups. Also, peacebuilding actors responded to the conflict by sending in armed troops. France, being the first reactor to the conflict, felt obligated to because of their colonial past in the country. The French felt a sense of accountability for the violence and politicized the situation by sending French troops to protect civilians.

Peacebuilders can have humanitarian aspects in their agendas. It is obvious that armed peacebuilders attempt to protect and defend vulnerable populations. The MINUSCA mission alongside other international organizations incorporate features of both humanitarianism and peacebuilding principles. MINUSCA's responsibilities include reforming the security sector, promote rule of law, support the local police, and creating community oriented policing, amongst others. These entail protecting the safety of civilians and also state-building.

Another important factor of humanitarianism is the ethical requirement to respond to crises. The healthcare humanitarian actors present in CAR, such as Doctors Without Borders

(MSF) and the ICRC, react to grave medical issues and strive to save lives. Other humanitarian agencies, mainly Christian organizations, focus on solving the situation through mediation, community building, and reconciliation initiatives.

CAR's context is also quite interesting in terms of publicity. Numerous times the conflict has been described as neglected, even by international officials. However, there are still high numbers of humanitarian agencies present and many INGOs visit and research the conflict, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. But CAR's conflict is not seen on the front page of newspapers nor discussed on social media. The extreme violence, the humanitarian crises, and the ethnic cleansing have not been focused on by the Global North. Nevertheless, there is still some funding being poured into CAR, but not as much as it desperately needs. This will be mentioned in the following section.

Chapter 4: Endless Violence?
June 2017 Ceasefire Agreement

A recent development in CAR's peacemaking process occurred on June 19, 2017. The government and 14 rebel group representatives signed an immediate ceasefire in Rome, Italy after five days of negotiations. The ceasefire was facilitated by Community of Sant'Egidio, an Italian based Christian community that is recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. A point of contention here is that the conflict has seen bloodshed spilled over religion. Having a Christian organization hold a peace conference can be considered ill-advised because it ostracizes the Muslims. Also, holding another peace talk outside CAR, in an European city, separates the suffering civilians.

The Italian government and Sant-Edigio acted as mediators and emphasized the need for an AU presence when implementing the agreement, demonstrating the lack of knowledge on the population's attitudes toward AU troops. The current Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in CAR, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, called for the ceasefire meeting in response to the re-emergence of violence in certain areas. "We know that much remains to be

done. It is vital that the ceasefire agreed upon by the parties comes into force immediately to free the populations and the many regions of the country that are still suffering from armed."[111]

After the general elections, there was relative peace in and around the regions by Bangui. However, the more distant regions had violent upheavals that saw 300 people dead and hundreds injured according to UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). UN Peacekeepers stationed in the southeast region also have been attacked and killed. Ornanga stated that this ceasefire agreement "makes it possible to envisage the future with additional optimism, confident that by virtue of the inter-Central African dialogue the daughters and sons of this beautiful country will be able to take their own destiny in their hands."[112]

The ceasefire did not even last a day. There was an estimated 50 people killed in the northwestern region of Bria, located 580 kilometers from Bangui, despite the ceasefire agreement. Shotgun fighting broke out between rival armed factions on June 21st at dawn, according to the Bria mayor. Bodies were seen laying on the streets and dozens were treated at a local hospital run by MSF but multiple bodies have not been collected in some remote neighborhoods.

The agreement promised political representation to the armed groups in exchange for ending violent attacks and blockades. But as demonstrated by the violence, the ceasefire did not carry any significance. "We signed the agreement, but we have to defend ourselves, we can't allow an attack to happen without reaction."[113] This was stated by Djamil Babanani, a spokesman for the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic (FPRC), an armed rebel group that was previously a part of the Séléka.

President Toudéra's office praised the ceasefire as a historic accord. This praise was not shared by others in the capital. Joseph Bindoumi, president of the Central African League of Human Rights stated, "this accord simply follows the same scenario repeated over and over. Those who signed are mocking the people."[114] Bindoumi is not wrong, there have been multiple signed agreements to end the violence that have not come to fruition.

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[111] Onanga-Anyanga, Parfait. "The Special Representative Welcomes the Rome Agreement and Requests a Cease-Fire to Stop the Suffering of Civilians." MINUSCA Press Release, June 20, 2017.
[112] Ibid.
[113] "Dozens killed in CAR's Bria despite ceasefire deal." *Al-Jazeera*, June 21, 2017.
[114] Ibid.

The main issue is that these armed groups are continuously attacking civilians. Since March 2017, fighting has been on the increase in the eastern and the civilian populations are suffering. A major component is whether the armed group leaders that signed the ceasefire can exert sufficient authority over their soldiers and successfully disarm. It is difficult to determine, but the revenge and hatred that has been motivating these armed groups will need a strong alternative to violence.

4.2 Current Figures

This section will briefly provide the most updated key figures on CAR's humanitarian crisis in order to gage the severity of the conflict's human cost. OCHA has provided estimated numbers as of June 2017, whereas other official reports by humanitarian organizations are not as recent. There are 481,000 Central African refugees, 503,600 IDP's, and 2.2 million in need of assistance and protection. The Humanitarian Response Plan's funding status has a total estimated requirement of $399.5 million USD but the funding to date is at $120.8 million. That is a funding gap of $278.7 million and only 30.2% of the plan's budget.[115] Without this funding, most civilians do not have access to proper medical care and food.

This section will discuss the recent violence. Within the past months of 2017, pockets of violence caused by former members of both the Séléka and anti-Balaka has caused civil unrest in various provinces. According to UN and media reports, fighting in the southeast provinces of Mbomou, Basse-Kotto, and Haute-Kotto internally displaced an approximate 100,000 citizens in May and prompted an estimated 20,600 people to flee to the DRC. In Alindao, violence resulted in at least 130 people dead and caused 11,000 to seek refuge internally. The June 2017 IDP number increased 14 percent from April estimates. The rising numbers are due to the targeting of civilians by armed groups. Due to this, humanitarian organizations and NGOs are struggling to gain access to certain areas. There have been reports of attacks on aid workers, which an impediment to aid operations. Humanitarian organizations also lack funding and international attention as another reason they do not have the resources and materials to spread out their operations to afflicted provinces.[116]

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[115] OCHA Report-CAR. United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs, June 2017. Available from: http://www.unocha.org/car.
[116] "Central African Republic-Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #4, Fiscal Year." USAID, June 2, 2017.

Although the UN agencies are most likely to be the most well-funded and represented actor in CAR currently, it is necessary to be critical of these 'official' reports. There is a possibility of a margin of error due to CAR's lack of infrastructure and inability to reach remote areas. In reality, these numbers may be much higher. To continue, I realize that utilizing reports conducted by NGOs or other actors need to be assessed critically because the probability of accurately representing the various issues in an independent manner is small. They also are subject to margins of error and most likely do not depict the full situation.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Justice

CAR's peacebuilding process established a tribunal, the Special Criminal Court (SCC) in collaboration with the International Criminal Court (ICC) that is seated in The Hague, in June 2015. CAR has a history of impunity that needs to be addressed in order to serve justice to the victims of the conflict, whose human rights have been grossly violated and those who have experienced atrocious crimes. The new SCC tribunal is composed of domestic and international staff and its major feature is accountability promotion to curtail violence. The tribunal has a truth and reconciliation committee. "Truth-telling can play an important role after a conflict, but it does not replace the need for prosecutions of serious crimes in fair and credible trials. Victims should not be deprived of their assailant being brought to court, nor should perpetrators be able to escape the law."[117]

It is important to note that having the court embedded in CAR's national justice system, staffed by locals, is a significant step towards peace because it does not separate the suffering population from the justice process.[118] Nonetheless, the ICC is conducting their own investigations into crimes against humanity, war crimes, amongst other charges. I argue that prosecution and the trials should be operated locally in order for the average citizen to see the justice process take place, rather in a distant, European country that has not experienced the gravity of CAR's violence. It is necessary to have technical and other material support from the

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[117] Mudge, Lewis. "Justice Needed for Lasting Peace in Central African Republic: Prosecute those Responsible for Grave Crimes." *Human Rights Watch,* June 20, 2017.

[118] Labuda, Patryk. "The Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic." *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 15, no. 1 (2017): 177.

ICC and other international actors in order to conduct the investigations and prosecutions in a secure manner.

Reflecting back on Paffenholz's definition of peace requiring a vibrant civil society, justice will mobilize political participation and representation. Central Africans need to see those accountable prosecuted in order to facilitate reconciliation. Also, there is an important gender sensitive issue that needs to be addressed by the courts. Members of the armed groups and the MINUSCA mission have been accused of rape and sexually abuse from the vulnerable civilians in enclaves that need to be brought to justice.[119] Nonetheless, this might be difficult to identify the exact perpetrators and victims may be too traumatized to go through the prosecution process. Also, French forces were dismissed of charges accusing them of sexually abusing children by a French judge in January 2017.[120] This is extremely frustrating and grossly horrendous because their purpose was to protect and prevent harm for those defenseless populations and their domestic court system did not even allow the cases to go to trial. I suggest that the SCC and ICC expand their jurisdiction to investigate UN Peacekeepers and this will bring a sense of legitimacy, justice, and end their impunity. This might be difficult because Peacekeepers report to their nation's judicial system. Another suggestion could be to open a special tribunal for the sole purpose of prosecuting alleged crimes committed by peacekeepers.

5.2 Education

I argue that CAR's society socialized the population into two categories: Christians and Muslims. Deeply embedded resentment and political competition between the two groups have a history based on economic inequality and power struggles. The prior peace initiatives have addressed the religious and political element but have lacked one crucial element: education. Education is immensely critical to the creating sustainable peace. The Central African youth have not been able to attend school due to violence, but in the recent months some schools have re-opened. The new government should invest in education and establishing a socialization platform that builds trust and equality between the groups is a suggestion on how to eradicate the

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[119] "Central African Republic: Rape by Peacekeepers UN, Troop-Contributing Countries Should Hold Abusers Accountable." New York: *Human Rights Watch*, February 4, 2016.
[120] Morenne, Benoît. "No Charges in Sexual Abuses Cases Against French Peacekeepers." *The New York Times,* January 6, 2017.

hostility. "By establishing non-traditional learning spaces to educate for peace, peace can become more of a process and less of a product for children."[121] Teachers can be trained in this framework provided by internal and external experts on conflict resolution.

The education system that was created after the 1994 Rwandan genocide can serve as an example for CAR. Both Rwanda and CAR share similar colonial histories and their populations experienced systematic divisions. In post-genocide Rwanda, the state-sponsored education system promoted equality and a culture of peace and national unity. Their policies strived to "guarantee inclusive and equal educational opportunities to all Rwandans."[122] This was done in various ways but the primary one was having the classrooms and the youth be of both ethnicities, eliminating the divide.

Although it will be extremely difficult to re-socialize populations and adjust how the communities view each other, education is a step that can be taken to achieve this. Schools can have both communities present in the classrooms in order to create civility and trust. The youth are the ones who have been neglected in CAR; their lack of opportunities due to conflict creates frustration against the feared 'other' and encourages joining armed groups. By providing education, this frustration can be diminished. However, I realize that disarment beforehand is required because it not, the children will be unsafe.

5.3 Final Argument

CAR's peacebuilding process has been composed of peace treaties, NGOs, religious actors, democratic elections, etc. The prior peace agreements signed by elites and armed group leaders have occurred mostly outside of CAR. This is important because peace has been negotiated outside of the conflict and consequently caused their failure. Decisions and conferences, the notable exception being the Bangui Forum, are held in other, mostly African states and seated by elites who are not suffering. The national ownership does not reflect the civilians, there is not enough national dialogue. Funding, amongst other decisions regarding peacekeeping, is decided in Brussels and New York without significant representation from

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[121] Fulcher, Jesse. "Learning Peace: Progressive Impacts of Peace Education in Peacebuilding." *Social Alternatives* 31, no. 4 (2012): 42.

[122] Bentrovato, Denise. Narrating and Teaching the Nation : The Politics of Education in Pre- and Post-genocide Rwanda. Eckert. Schriftenreihe ; Bd. 138. 2015.

CAR. This conduct of the peacebuilding process is limiting and frustrating. I argue that the prior peace initiatives have not hindered the brutality because most of the initiatives do not directly impact or represent the civilians.

By having the SCC and the promotion of accountability is a major step but the lack of a cohesive Central African identity is also a key deterrent. This separation can be addressed through education and socialization projects. These initiatives need to foster a sense of a holistic and inclusive Central African identity, where citizens do not fear the other and have equal opportunities.

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