

Baroness Catherine Ashton

High Representative of the Union for Common Foreign
and Security Policy
Vice President of the European Commission

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS OFFICE

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Dear Baroness Ashton,

EU MUST ACT TO END IMPUNITY IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Ending impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious human rights violations and abuses constitutes one of the main challenges facing the Transitional Authorities of the Central African Republic (CAR) as well as members of the international community as a whole. Amnesty International calls on the European Union (EU) and its member states to take immediate and concerted steps to support CAR in addressing these systematic and widespread crimes.

In a recent report, [Central African Republic: Time for Accountability](#), Amnesty International examines the current efforts to address impunity and reinforce the justice system in CAR. CAR's Transitional Authorities and members of the international community must now prioritise the fight against impunity, including through independent investigations and prosecutions of alleged perpetrators, particularly those suspected of having command responsibility. Amnesty International also recognises and emphasises the need for reparations. CAR's justice system must be rebuilt in the medium and long term, in line with CAR's international human rights obligations. Neighbouring and other countries, where some suspects are currently living, must also ensure that these individuals do not escape justice and that they are held accountable for crimes they are alleged to have committed in CAR.

Amnesty International has extensively researched and documented war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed in CAR. Since December 2013, deliberate large-scale killings of civilians have continued unabated, sometimes followed by mutilation, dismembering and burning of the bodies. Other crimes taking place in the country include torture, enforced disappearances, recruitment and use of children in armed forces, rape and other forms of sexual violence, looting, demolition and burning of houses, villages and places of worship, such as mosques and churches, as well as the forced displacement of populations. The organisation found that in many incidents, victims appeared to be targeted and attacked on religious grounds, solely for being Christians or Muslims. Most attacks were conducted openly, the perpetrators showing no remorse or fear of sanction. Some of these violations and abuses constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

If not addressed now, impunity will prevent any attempt to tackle the ongoing inter-communal and sectarian violence and restore confidence in justice. This will foster cycles of violence and contribute to further abuses in the future.

In line with commitments to place human rights at the centre of all external action, and with commitments in the Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights as well as the EU Guidelines on International Humanitarian Law, Amnesty International calls on the EU and its member states to address the violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in CAR's ongoing crisis:

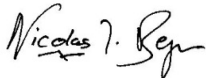
- Provide full political backing and financial support to the CAR Transitional Authorities to urgently conduct investigations into crimes under international law and serious human rights violations and

abuses and for the reform of the CAR justice system, taking into consideration issues related to reparations for victims, the protection of victims and witnesses and reconciliation initiatives

- Provide sustained resources and political support for long-term national initiatives related to the continuing capacity building of the rule of law sector and the work of the proposed Hybrid Court, as well as other initiatives related to the reform of the justice sector in the country
- Ensure that human rights in CAR, including transitional justice and justice system reform, remain high on the EU and the international agenda in the longer term
- Ensure that the EU military operation in CAR (EUFOR-RCA) uses all means available within its mandate to contribute to reinforcing the justice system in CAR and the fight against impunity.

We welcome your engagement to end impunity in CAR, and stand ready to provide any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Nicolas J. Beger
Director

Cc:

Nicholas Westcott, Managing Director for Africa, EEAS

Peteris Ustubs, Director and Senior Coordinator, West and Central Africa, EEAS

Katharina Buse, Desk Officer, Central African Republic, EEAS