EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR'S KEY MESSAGES ON THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
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Key Messages

1. The political crisis in the Central African Republic has triggered a dramatic deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the country. All of the CAR’s 4.6 million people are affected and tens of thousands of people need emergency shelter, healthcare and food aid.

2. The breakdown of law and order has led to widespread violations of human rights including targeted killings, rapes, torture, arbitrary arrests and the recruitment of child soldiers. Since December, more than 173,000 people have been internally displaced and 49,000 have sought asylum in neighbouring countries. Even before this crisis, 3.2 million people in the CAR had no access to healthcare and some 80,000 people were at risk of severe food insecurity; these figures will increase. Almost all public schools are closed.

3. Insecurity is making it difficult to supply humanitarian aid to Central Africans in desperate need. Offices and warehouses of UN agencies and NGOs have been looted and most humanitarian operations are restricted to Bangui. Aid workers outside the capital are putting their safety at great risk to get help to people. The authorities must do everything possible to protect civilians, particularly women and children, and put an end to the looting of humanitarian facilities, vehicles and warehouses.

4. UN agencies and NGOs are doing what they can in very difficult circumstances. They have brought water purification products to Bangui and delivered drugs, obstetric and surgical supplies to health centres, maternity units and hospitals in the city. Some NGOs have maintained their operations in parts of the country that have been less affected by looting and violence. Several UN agencies are airlifting emergency supplies into Bangui so that they will be ready when access is re-established.

5. Additional funding is urgently needed to restock supplies and enable humanitarian agencies to respond to the increased needs. Medical supplies, food and nutrition aid, and the provision of critical water, sanitation and hygiene services are essential to save thousands of lives. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service needs urgent funding so that remote areas of the CAR can be reached. The annual humanitarian appeal for the CAR was 26 per cent funded as of 2 May.

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