

Policy Briefing

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The Central African Republic's Hidden Conflict

I. Overview

While the international community and the transitional government focus on Bangui, the capital, most of the rural areas, in particular the west and centre of the Central African Republic (CAR), have turned into fields of violence. The fierce struggle between the ex-Seleka and anti-balaka militiamen has led to a surge of intercommunal clashes between pastoralist and farming communities since 2013. These clashes have formed a conflict-within-the-conflict that further destabilises the country, away from the international spotlight and the attention of the transitional government. Ahead of a new transhumance period that may intensify the ongoing rural warfare, the transitional government and the international community should focus closely on preventing the escalation of violence between pastoralist and farming communities by making this aspect of the CAR crisis an integral part of their stabilisation strategy.

Before the CAR crisis began at the end of 2012, pastoralism had been a source of violence in rural areas for several years, notably between pastoralist and farming communities. The crisis has further exacerbated resentment and violence between these groups because of the herdsmen's perceived links to ex-Seleka members. Live-stock is coveted both by anti-balaka and ex-Seleka militiamen, and pastoralists often respond to cattle thefts with brutal retaliations as cattle is the wealth of the poor. The enrolment of vulnerable young herdsmen in armed groups, the crumbling of traditional agro-pastoralist mediation structures and the yearly coming of pastoralists, especially Chadians, to CAR may amplify the ongoing bush warfare.

Since 2013, this rural war has forced many pastoralist communities to take refuge in Chad and Cameroon or to flee to other CAR regions, often after having walked for a long time. These displacements are exacting a heavy toll, causing the collapse of the livestock farming sector, the radicalisation of some pastoralist groups and the blockage of transhumance movements between Chad and CAR. These long-term obstacles to the stabilisation of the country must be addressed.

To contain rural violence in the short term:

- ❑ Create an information network, coordinated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the CAR livestock ministry, in order to locate the areas at risk of violent confrontation between, on the one hand, pastoralists and, on the other, anti-balaka and local communities. This network must

serve as an early warning mechanism for CAR authorities, NGOs and international forces (the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the French mission Sangaris).

- ❑ Include the fight against cattle theft and trafficking into the mandate of a MINUSCA cell against diamond, gold and ivory trafficking, whose creation has been recommended by Crisis Group since June 2014.
- ❑ Reduce cattle density in south-western Chad by organising a regional consultation between Chadian, CAR, Cameroonian authorities and NGOs, under the aegis of MINUSCA, in order to identify in those countries safe areas with pasturelands for pastoralists. This should be a temporary settlement that requires the agreement of the host communities and the pastoralists.

To address the causes of rural violence in the medium term:

- ❑ Revive traditional agro-pastoralist mediation mechanisms through organisation of informal meetings between representatives of the different communities by conflict prevention NGOs. As confidence-building measures, international forces should forbid armed groups to get involved in these mechanisms.
- ❑ Broadcast messages through community radios run by churches and local NGOs recalling common interests and exchanges between pastoralists and farmers. These messages should especially be circulated among women who usually play a key role in these intercommunity exchanges.
- ❑ Include in livelihood activity programs led by international NGOs the pastoralists without livestock who took refuge in Chad and Cameroon and those still living in CAR.
- ❑ Launch a feasibility study by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to restart livestock breeding where the security situation permits it.

II. An Invisible and Brutal Conflict

The conflict in CAR has hit pastoralists particularly hard. CAR and Chadian pastoralists, whether sedentary or semi-sedentary, are playing an important but little understood role in the crisis. They are involved in a cycle of intercommunal revenge attacks and often fall victim to the attacks of armed groups.¹

From the start of the ex-Seleka's westward advance in 2013, the anti-balaka militias have viewed pastoralists as allies of their Seleka enemies.² The fact that some young, impoverished Fulani, often alienated from traditional structures and sometimes with a history as militiamen or "road-cutters", are members of the ex-Seleka, stirred up confusion and caused a cycle of bloody reprisals.³ Condemnation of the behaviour of individual young Fulani has evolved into the stigmatisation of the entire Fulani community, which has been blamed for the troubles. This popular perception has been strengthened by the fact that the Fulani are Muslims and also by accumulated resentment between pastoralists and farmers in rural areas during recent years.⁴

Between September and December 2013, this confusion between Seleka and pastoralists unleashed a wave of violence against the Fulani communities.⁵ Punitive attacks on their camps and massacres took place, for example, at Bossangoa, in the north west, and at Boali, to the north of the capital, Bangui, in October.⁶ These developments radicalised some pastoralists, who are often well-armed and driven by a desire for vengeance. They responded to the killing of members of their communities by deadly attacks on other communities. For example, they recently led attacks not far from the town of Bambari, in the Ouaka region in the centre of the country.⁷ This score-settling has led to escalating and unprecedented violence in rural areas, far from the eyes and well down the list of concerns of other institutional actors in charge of the resolution of the CAR crisis (the transitional government, the UN, the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the EU).

¹ This briefing is based on information gathered during interviews conducted in rural areas, refugee camps in Chad and Cameroon and with the CAR and Chad authorities.

² See Crisis Group Africa Reports N°203, *Central African Republic: Priorities of the Transition*, 11 June 2013 and N°219, *The Central African Crisis: From Predation to Stabilisation*, 17 June 2014.

³ The Fulani include many groups in Central Africa. The largest groups are Mbororo and Fulbe. In CAR, the Mbororo groups are composed of Wodaabe and Jaafun, who migrated from Cameroon in the 1920s and also the Aku (sometimes called the Daneeji, in reference to their herds of white zebu), who came from southern Chad and arrived a little later. More recently, the Mbororo from Chad have undertaken transhumant activity in the CAR where some of them are based. The Uda'en form a majority of this group and have a reputation for being well-armed and violent. Others in this group are the Biibe Woyla, Hontorbe and Anagamba. Emmanuel Chauvin and Christian Seignobos, "L'imbroglia centrafricain, Etat, rebelles et bandits", *Afrique contemporaine*, no. 248 (2013-2014), p. 119-148.

⁴ See Crisis Group Africa Report N°215, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, 1 April 2014.

⁵ "Les éleveurs sont avec eux, ils font partie du camp d'en face". Crisis Group interviews, residents of the capital, Bangui, 27 February 2014.

⁶ "They came to kill", Human Rights Watch, 19 December 2013; "En Centrafrique: massacres et représailles entre chrétiens et musulmans", *Le Monde*, 5 December 2013.

⁷ "Attaque meurtrière en Centrafrique", BBC Afrique, 23 October 2014.

A. The Pastoralist Communities: Victims and Perpetrators

1. Cattle: source of wealth, cause of violence

In CAR, as elsewhere in the sub-region, cattle is an important economic capital and has long been both a source of wealth and a cause of violence.⁸ From the 1970s, local authorities in the west of the country, where the Gbaya are in the majority,⁹ levied taxes on pastoralists, given that the value of their cattle made them much wealthier than the sedentary hunter-gatherer-farmer Gbaya communities. These taxes undermined the previously good relations between the farming communities and the sedentary and semi-sedentary Fulani groups that had come from Cameroon in the 1920s.¹⁰ Such practices were later extended to other provinces.

For the last twenty years, soldiers in the CAR army, “road-cutters” and armed groups have made a lot of money out of pastoralists.¹¹ They marauded along the migration routes, making life insecure for the pastoralists, contributing to their militarisation and forcing them to change routes.¹² This further impoverished the pastoralists who, for the last twenty years, have seen their herds dwindle because of insecurity, inflation and an increase in family size. These changes have modified old pastoralist practices and compelled many pastoralists to diversify their activities and become farmer-pastoralists or trader-pastoralists.¹³

Ex-Seleka and anti-balaka militiamen soon became involved in this long history of predation and the current crisis has led to an unprecedented level of cattle trafficking. This phenomenon is due to the “recycling” of combatants from the armed groups and self-defence committees since the 1990s. The same people are committing the same crimes but under different labels. For example, one of the most prominent anti-balaka leaders used to be a “road-cutter”, who held sway in Batangafo, in northern CAR, until 2012. He achieved such notoriety as a cattle thief that the Chadian authorities demanded that the CAR authorities neutralise him.¹⁴

⁸ See Crisis Group Africa Report, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, op. cit.

⁹ For more on the Gbaya, see Pierre Kalck, *Histoire de la République centrafricaine* (Paris, 1977); Pierre Vidal, Tazunu, *Nana-Modé, Toala ou: de l'archéologie des cultures africaines et centrafricaines et de leur histoire ancienne*, (Bangui 1982); Paulette Roulon-Doko, *Conception de l'espace et du temps chez les Gbaya de Centrafrique*, (Paris, 1996).

¹⁰ The Gbaya and the Mbororo had long maintained good relations that led to their women developing mutual aid and solidarity systems. Moreover, the Mbororo and the Gbaya often engaged in trade with each other and no hierarchical system interfered with this relationship. For more information on the nature of these relations, see Paulette Roulon-Doko, “Mon amie Mbororo, vingt ans de contact Gbaya-Mbororo”, in Baumgardt Ursula and Jean Derive (dir.), *Paroles nomades, écrits d'ethnolinguistique africaine* (Paris 2005), p. 281-287. Also see Jean Boutrais, “Les savanes humides: dernier refuge pastoral: l'exemple des Wodaabe, Mbororo de Centrafrique”, *Genève Afrique*, no. 28 (1990) p. 65-90.

¹¹ Emmanuel Chauvin and Christian Seignobos, op. cit.

¹² See Crisis Group Africa Report, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, op. cit.

¹³ See Claude Arditi, “La paupérisation des éleveurs peuls de RCA”, in Guillaume Duteurtre and Bernard Faye, *L'élevage, richesse des pauvres* (Paris 2009), p. 37-51.

¹⁴ Andilo, also known as Angelo, is one of the most feared anti-balaka leaders in CAR. He stole a lot of cattle in the Batangafo area over several years. He is well known by Batangafo's local authorities as well as pastoralists in the area. Angelo was arrested but released in 2012 in circumstances not yet known. Crisis Group interviews, local authorities, Batangafo, December 2012.

2. The criminalisation and “militianisation” of young pastoralists

This is not the first time that some pastoralists in Central Africa in general and CAR in particular have turned to banditry. For example, many joined “road-cutting” gangs. Loss of livestock and the resulting impoverishment have led some pastoralists to turn to banditry in order to survive, while the weakness of the family unit has led to generational conflicts. Young pastoralists want to be free of traditional hierarchical structures in which their status is determined by their age and they are also looking for ways of getting rich quick. In urban areas, this quest for independence is complicated by the social and cultural environment. So some of them join armed groups engaged in rural crime whose main victims are other pastoralists.¹⁵

These young pastoralists were lured by the ex-Seleka from the moment it was formed and the crisis accelerated this process. Cattle thefts, a deepening desire for vengeance and the enlistment bonus offered by armed groups provided the ingredients for an explosive cocktail. Refugees in southern Chad comment on how young Fulani are leaving the camps to cross the border and enlist in exchange for remuneration.¹⁶ The pendular movement of young Fulani from southern Chad to the Nana Bakassa-Markounda axis has often had equally deadly results.¹⁷ In recent months, there have been reports of pastoralists’ involvement in armed groups north of Bémal as well as attacks by Fulani “road-cutters”.¹⁸

Finally, some of the pastoralists who have committed atrocities previously belonged to Baba Laddé’s Popular Front for Recovery (FPR).¹⁹ Although the Fulani warlord returned to Chad at the end of 2012 with 400 of his men, other FPR combatants followed the example of Ali Darassa and Colonel Saad and joined either the Seleka or independent militias, especially in the north of Ouham Pende in north-western CAR, where the latter have carried out several attacks.²⁰

¹⁵ For more information on young Fulani’s desire for emancipation in CAR and Cameroon, see Jean Boutrais, “Nderkaaku: la folle jeunesse chez les Foulbés de l’Adamaoua”, *Journal des africanistes*, no. 1 (2002), p. 165-181; Christian Seignobos, “Le phénomène zargina dans le nord du Cameroun”, *Afrique contemporaine*, no. 239 (2011), p. 35-59. Also see Jeanne Guégan, “La marginalisation des Mbororo au nord Cameroun”, mémoire d’études, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), Paris, 2008-2009.

¹⁶ Crisis Group interview, CAR refugee, Goré, southern Chad, 31 August 2014.

¹⁷ “Centrafrique: une vingtaine de morts en trois jours dans le nord”, *Le Parisien*, 3 May 2014.

¹⁸ Crisis Group interview, member of a humanitarian NGO, Bangui, 5 October 2014. “Centrafrique: une vingtaine de morts en trois jours dans le nord”, *Le Parisien*, 3 May 2014; report by an international NGO, Bangui, 27 November 2014.

¹⁹ Baba Laddé, a Chadian rebel, led the FPR, an armed group formed in 1998. It committed many atrocities in the CAR regions of Ouaka, Nana-Grébizi and Ouham. Baba Laddé denounced the marginalisation of Fulani pastoralists. He protected many of them but subjected others to extortion. In September 2012, the CAR and Chad armies conducted operations against the FPR, forcing Baba Laddé to surrender, and attacked the Fulani communities who they presumed were supporting the movement. Many Fulani were killed in these operations. Crisis Group interview, researcher, Bangui, 5 October 2014. On his return to Chad, Baba Laddé became an adviser to the prime minister, then went to Niger in response to threats he claimed to have received. In 2014, the Chadian president, Idriss Déby made him prefect of Maro. He belatedly took office in October, before again disappearing from the scene. See Crisis Group Africa Report, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, op. cit. Crisis Group interviews, Chadian authorities, southern Chad, 30 August 2014. “Tchad: la mystérieuse disparition de l’ancien rebelle Baba Laddé”, RFI, 3 December 2014.

²⁰ At the start of 2014, these groups even succeeded in temporarily taking control of Bang, a town close to the Cameroon-Chad border. See “Mapping conflict motives: the Central African Republic”, International Peace Information Service (IPIS), Antwerp, November 2014. Colonel Saad was Sele-

B. *The Pastoralists Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place*

1. The anti-balaka, expert cattle thieves

As soon as the anti-balaka expanded their operations into the south and west of the country at the end of 2013 and start of 2014, they began stealing cattle and often killed their owners.²¹ They established control over the roads so they could extort livestock dealers and organised expeditions into the bush to steal cattle. Some of the stolen cattle were sold to non-Muslim butchers in local markets and in Bangui.²² Others were sold at Cameroonian markets along the border, for example, at Margouga, Tibati and Ngaoui in the Adamaoua region.²³ Along the border with Cameroon, the anti-balaka also stole cattle belonging to Fulani refugees, who sometimes paid them to return the livestock.²⁴ Cattle dealers and butchers in Yaoundé were well-informed about the availability of “cheap meat”.²⁵

Although the CAR authorities did nothing, Chad sent a mission to Ngaoundéré, in Adamaoua, led by a presidential adviser with responsibility for pastoralism and accompanied by Chadian pastoralists who had recognised some of their cattle at markets. The governor of Adamaoua finally acknowledged the existence of this illegal trade and the Chadian mission obtained financial compensation.²⁶

2. The ex-Seleka's control of the livestock markets

Ex-Seleka combatants have done well out of the cattle trade. They are more organised than the anti-balaka and have tried to control the livestock trade such as in Bangui's market in the PK13 district, an old market transferred to PK45 under former president Bozizé but transferred back by the ex-Seleka after the coup in March 2013.²⁷ Described as an old cattle dealer, the ex-Seleka Colonel Hissene Kourou set up a parallel administration of the market, forbidding entry to the technical live-

ka's “comzone” in Berberati, in south-western CAR, until the start of 2014. Crisis Group interviews, local authorities, Berberati, 13 March 2014. He is reportedly detained in Koro Toro, Chad. See *ibid.*

²¹ “The Muslim business community of Bossangoa prepared a list of 21 Muslim-owned cattle camps that were raided, counting nearly 5,000 heads of cattle looted, a massive financial, social and cultural loss for this largely nomadic community”. “They came to kill”, Human Rights Watch, 19 December 2013. Crisis Group interviews, local authorities and members of NGOs, Berberati, 13 March 2014 and religious leaders, Berberati, 12 March 2014.

²² The anti-balaka sometimes slaughtered and smoked the cattle on the spot and sold the meat in the towns. See “Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2127 (2013)”, S/2014/762, 29 October 2014.

²³ By the time CAR refugees arrived at the border, many of their cattle were weak and a significant number died. This led the refugees to sell their stock at a low price. Crisis Group interview, livestock services manager, Bangui, 4 October 2014.

²⁴ Crisis Group interviews, refugees, Gbiti (eastern Cameroon), May 2014.

²⁵ Crisis Group telephone interview, butcher, Yaoundé, 24 November 2014.

²⁶ Crisis Group interview, adviser to the Chad presidency, Ndjamena, 28 August 2014.

²⁷ The livestock market's location was for a long time a source of tension between the government and livestock dealers and also between the latter and the National Federation of Central African Livestock Producers (FNEC). It is therefore not surprising to find former Bangui cattle dealers among the ranks of the ex-Seleka. The four major livestock trade associations are mainly Arab and only one of them is Fulani. There has been constant tension between these dealers and the FNEC, whose members are mostly Fulani. Crisis Group interview, livestock services manager, Bangui, 4 October 2014.

stock services and misappropriating the taxes levied on this sector for several months.²⁸ He also organised droves of stolen cattle to Chad.²⁹

This phenomenon has now spread to the provinces. Ex-Seleka personnel plays the role of armed tax collectors and makes regular visits to pastoralists camped along the Kabo-Batangafo, Kabo-Ouandago and Kabo-Moyenne Sido roads in the north of the country.³⁰ They also levy taxes at water points and along transhumance routes.

Interaction between pastoralists and ex-Seleka combatants takes various forms, depending on the local situation and the sociology of the combatants and pastoralists. In Kabo, in the centre-north of the CAR, some pastoralists are subjected to extortion by the ex-Seleka while others escape the attention of this armed group. The Misseriya Arab pastoralists, who came from Chad in the 1980s, have good relations with dealers in the towns, some of whom are members of groups formed by ex-Seleka combatants. This means that, unlike the Fulani, they are not affected by extortion or cattle theft.³¹

3. Mediation: a lucrative activity

Anti-balaka and ex-Seleka groups employ different strategies to control territory. While groups of young anti-balaka try to control sections of roads so they can levy informal taxes and steal goods (vehicles, humanitarian aid, money, etc.),³² ex-Seleka combatants take over the administration of towns, occupying customs and police infrastructure and even assume the role of magistrates on some occasions.

Even more worryingly, ex-Seleka “comzones” or “combases” have also taken over traditional mediation mechanisms.³³ In Kabo, local warlords now “arbitrate” in conflicts between pastoralists and farmers: when cattle trample on the fields, ex-Seleka men assess the damage and set the amount of the fine, while taking a commission for themselves. This appropriation of traditional functions by local warlords has had major consequences. It has led to the collapse of the traditional practice of seeking informal agreements and traditional amicable settlements that maintained a certain social cohesion in northern parts of the country. It also militianised a social function. The participation of armed men in this process could represent a fatal blow to international NGO initiatives to revitalise the traditional mediation committees and restore social ties between farmers and pastoralists.

²⁸ Michel Djotodia, then CAR president after the coup in March, intervened in August 2013 to ensure that the livestock services were able to resume their activities at the PK13 market. Crisis Group interview, director of Bangui abattoir, Bangui, 5 October 2014.

²⁹ “Un colonel tchadien de la Seleka tente la partition de la RCA: que disent Djotodia, Tiangaye et la CEEAC”, Kangbi-Ndara (www.kangbi-ndara.com), 3 August 2013.

³⁰ Crisis Group interview, traditional Fulani chief, Kabo, 12 October 2014.

³¹ Most businessmen in the town of Kabo are Misseriya Arabs. Some are Runga, who are generally involved in fabrics and clothing. Closure of the border with Chad had a major effect on the economy of Kabo, which until then was a trading centre. Commerce is now at a standstill, the price of fuel has doubled and Sudanese traders have left the town. Crisis Group interview, trader, Kabo, 13 October 2014.

³² Many international NGO reports describe these robberies. For example, on 18 November 2014, a lorry chartered by an NGO and transporting medicines and other essential goods was stopped and looted on the Bambari-Grimari road allegedly by an anti-balaka group. On 5 and 7 November, anti-balaka militias attacked humanitarian convoys on the Bangui-Boali road. International NGO reports, Bangui, 5, 7 and 18 November 2014.

³³ “Comzone” and “combase” are terms adopted by ex-Seleka leaders themselves.

C. The Consequences of the Pastoralist War

The crisis in the CAR has changed the geography of pastoralism in the country,³⁴ led to the collapse of the livestock farming sector and fragmented the ex-Seleka. There is a danger that the current cycle of migration from Chad will exacerbate the crisis.

1. A new livestock geography and the collapse of the livestock farming sector

The crisis has forced pastoralists to move from the west and centre of the country toward neighbouring countries and to eastern and northern CAR. Massive numbers of pastoralists have fled from the west of the country toward Cameroon and Chad.³⁵ A direct consequence of this exodus is that pastoralists form a large proportion of the people in the refugees camps in Cameroon and Chad.³⁶ In the area controlled by the anti-balaka, pastoralists are now only present in certain enclaves, such as Yaloké and Boda. But these are islands of insecurity rather than sanctuaries and the pastoralist communities are under the constant threat of attack.³⁷

New areas of pastoralist settlement and concentration have emerged to the north and east of the front line connecting Paoua, Batangafo and Kaga Bandoro. The Kabo-Batangafo-Ouandago triangle is traditionally on the migration route of CAR pastoralists. Since the start of the crisis, thousands of new arrivals have set up a camp there in a quest for security.³⁸

Attacks have forced many pastoralists out of the centre of the country toward the south east and the regions of Mbomou and Haut Mbomou. Since the 1980s, many Mbororo have made their way to these areas, where they have been more or less spared by the current crisis.³⁹ Haut-Mbomou, on the border with South Sudan and Orientale province in the Democratic Republic of Congo is currently attracting pastoralists. To that extent, Mboki market is currently the place to sell cattle destined for these neighbouring countries.⁴⁰

Finally, fleeing pastoralists have also headed for the commune of Kouï, a grazing area near Bocaranga, and, to a lesser extent, Niem, near Bouar, to the west. The security situation is better there and pastoralists are able to cross the border to Cam-

³⁴ The forced displacement of pastoralists as a result of insecurity in CAR is not a new phenomenon. According to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 25,000 refugees, mainly Mbororo, fled toward Cameroon in 2005-2006 because road-cutters were stealing their cattle and abducting their children. "Cameroon: new office opens to protect and care for Mbororo Central Africans", briefing note, UNHCR, 27 March 2007.

³⁵ "Cameroun: aider les réfugiés centrafricains à surmonter les traumatismes des massacres", CARE, 21 November 2014.

³⁶ Crisis Group interviews, refugees, Garoua-Boulai and Gbiti camps, May 2014; refugees, Sido and Goré camps and the village of Mbitoye, southern Chad, August 2014.

³⁷ "UNHCR says over 15000 CAR civilians facing acute risk, better security urgently needed", briefing note, HCR, Bangui, 25 February 2014.

³⁸ Crisis Group interviews, pastoralist refugees, Moyenne Sido, 12 October 2014.

³⁹ In the south east, combatants in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) are still active but this group is in a state of advanced decline. Crisis Group interview, humanitarian actor, Bangui, 3 October 2014. However, there were violent clashes in the south east recently between local communities and the Fulani. "Centrafrique-Zémio: une attaque de Peul fait trois morts au village Dar", Réseau des journalistes pour les droits de l'homme, 4 December 2014.

⁴⁰ In Ango, in DRC, a Fulani told Crisis Group he had gone to Mboki on the CAR side of the border to trade before returning to Orientale province. Crisis Group interview, traditional Fulani chief, Ango, 20 August 2013.

eroon at various places. This mobility is facilitated by the strong links between the Jaafun Fulani communities on both sides of the border.⁴¹

The exodus of CAR pastoralists has led to the collapse of this economic sector. Meat has become scarce: activity at the main Bangui abattoir has fallen by 85 per cent, from 200 cattle slaughtered per day in 2012 to only 30 today.⁴² Past crises often led to a reorganisation of trade,⁴³ but entire regions now depend on the import of cattle. In the south west of the country, butchers sometimes travel to buy cattle at their former suppliers in the refugee camps in Cameroon.⁴⁴ In provinces where pastoralists have remained, the primary (villages) and secondary (towns) markets are often deserted because of the prevailing insecurity.⁴⁵ The breakdown of trading networks and the inaccessibility of the main markets have contributed to the impoverishment of pastoralists.

Disruption of the sector's entire supply chain has brought trade to a standstill. Use of credit systems by butchers, offered by wholesalers and Nigerian traders has declined. In Bangui, butchers used to survive and buy cattle thanks to the credit extended by the Nigerian traders. The Nigerians, specialists in the export of hides to Nigeria, have left and this injection of cash into the economy has therefore ceased.

2. Fragmentation of the armed groups: the revolt of the ex-Seleka Fulani

In Bambari, intercommunal tension, manifested in clashes with the anti-balaka, coupled with systematic extortion of pastoralists by ex-Seleka who were originally from the east of the country, led to the emergence of a large Fulani faction of ex-Seleka combatants in 2014. Ex-Seleka combatants who left Bria for the west in 2013 extorted many Fulani, selling the stolen produce on the spot to cattle dealing accomplices who then resold the produce in Sudan.⁴⁶ In addition, the "Bin Laden comzone"⁴⁷, a Gula close to former Seleka leader Michel Djotodia, levied taxes on the pastoralists of Bambari in order to finance the war effort. In addition, ex-Seleka men under the command of Tom Adam attacked the Fulani's herds.⁴⁸

In October 2014, in response to the actions of ex-Seleka men in Bambari and the attacks by the anti-balaka, Ali Darassa, former Fulani commander in the ex-Seleka and former right hand man of Baba Laddé, formed an armed movement called Unity

⁴¹ Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 8 December 2014.

⁴² Although Bambari and the south eastern regions of CAR are very important regions for livestock production and supply the Bangui market, animals are now transported along the river in barges and are hardly ever taken along the roads. Once they reach Bangui, butchers with links to the anti-balaka intercept some of them at Ouango Sayo at the "port" of the seventh district and slaughter them on the spot. National Livestock Development Agency (ANDE) officials are refused access to the area. Crisis Group interview, director of Bangui abattoir, Bangui, 1 October 2014.

⁴³ Emmanuel Chauvin, "Conflits armés, mobilités sous contraintes et recomposition des échanges vivriers dans le nord-ouest de la Centrafrique", doctoral study, geography, Paris, Université Paris Panthéon Sorbonne, 2014.

⁴⁴ Crisis Group interview, livestock sector actor, Bangui, 4 October 2014.

⁴⁵ Crisis Group interview, member of a humanitarian organisation, Bangui, 3 October 2014.

⁴⁶ Crisis Group interview, Fulani from Bambari, member of a humanitarian organisation, Bangui, 18 October 2014. See "Final Report of the Panel of Experts", op. cit.

⁴⁷ "Bin Laden" is said to have committed many atrocities against Bambari's civilian population. "Congo-Brazzaville: visite de Michel Djotodia à Oyo pour préparer la réunion de Bangui sur la RCA", RFI, 7 November 2013.

⁴⁸ See "Final Report of the Panel of Experts", op. cit.

for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC).⁴⁹ Since then, two other movements have been formed and the former Seleka rebellion is now split into three factions.⁵⁰ Accompanied by many well-armed men,⁵¹ Ali Darassa retook control of Bambari and inflicted a series of military defeats on the Gula of Zoundeko over several months, often as part of a struggle for control of natural resources.⁵² In Bambari, Ali Darassa was supported by his fellow Uda'en Fulani, who are numerous in the town's suburbs. Faced with a collective threat to them all, the other Fulani clans put their differences aside and formed an alliance.⁵³

Some Fulani have abandoned the strategy of self-defence and are now carrying out reprisals against the non-Muslim population of Bambari, some of whom have been displaced and are living in the surrounding villages.⁵⁴ Rather than making a proportionate response, the Fulani are killing members of other communities and exacerbating intercommunal hatred, as in September and October 2014, when they killed 30 people.⁵⁵

3. Cross-border transhumance – Chad/Central African Republic: A new danger on the horizon

Crisis Group has analysed the conflicts related to the annual Chadian transhumance to CAR and the dangerous consequences of a lack of inter-state regulation: disruption of traditional migration routes, increasing militarisation of some pastoralist migrants and the development of the phenomenon of neo-pastoralism.⁵⁶ The migration of Chadian pastoralist nomads into the CAR, which is usually a violent process, is taking place in a disastrous context: the provinces of Ouham and Ouham Pende in the north west are occupied by the anti-balaka and a few other groups such as Revolution and Justice,⁵⁷ and relations between Chadians and CAR nationals have

⁴⁹ "Communiqué final de l'assemblée générale de Bambari", press communiqué, senior military officers of the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic Front (FPRC), 25 October 2014.

⁵⁰ Latent for several months, the division of the ex-Seleka is now official. In Bambari, Ali Darassa is backed by the warlord Al Khatim, who controls the centre-north of CAR. In Bria, a faction called the Patriotic Rally for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic (RPRC) is mainly composed of Gula from the former Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) led by the warlords Zacharia Damane and Zoundeko. Nouredine Adam, former right hand man of Michel Djotodia, organised the FPRC congress in November, in Kaga Bandoro. This fragmentation of the movement has revealed divisions that always existed in the Seleka. "RCA: le temps des questions difficiles", *In Pursuit of Peace blog*, 4 November 2014.

⁵¹ Mahamat Ousmane Mahamat is reportedly the main supplier of arms to Ali Darassa. Crisis Group interview, Peul, Bangui, 18 October 2014.

⁵² "Bambari: violents combats entre Peuls et Goula de la Seleka", *Journal de Bangui*, 27 August 2014. Also see "Final Report of the Panel of Experts", op. cit.

⁵³ Crisis Group interview, Fulani from Bambari, member of a humanitarian organisation, Bangui, 18 October 2014.

⁵⁴ "Some 20,000 people, mostly Christian, are currently living in three camps for internally displaced people in Bambari: next to the MINUSCA base, next to the French military base, and in the Notre-Dame des Victoires Catholic church compound. In addition, a few thousand displaced Muslims are sheltering with host families in the town's Muslim quarter, known as the *Quartier Bornu*". See "Urgent action needed to tackle escalating violence in the central regions", Public Statement, Amnesty International, 6 November 2014.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See Crisis Group Africa Report, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, op. cit.

⁵⁷ This armed group said that it was involved in clashes with Fulani pastoralists and the Chadian army. See "Final Report of the Panel of Experts", op. cit.

deteriorated. In addition, despite preliminary contacts between the Chad and CAR authorities to regulate transhumance, the latter do not have the administrative capacity to implement existing arrangements and the crisis in the CAR has dealt a fatal blow to these initiatives.⁵⁸ There is a danger that traditional transhumance will make the crisis worse than it would otherwise have been.

The early returning home of Chadian pastoralists between March and May 2014 was a very violent affair and provided a tragic taste of what could happen during future migrations. The region of Ouham Pende was particularly affected. For example, in April, pastoralists led attacks in Bémal as they were returning to Chad. Chadian soldiers were complicit in this attack.⁵⁹ In addition, a cycle of retaliation launched by Chadian pastoralists and anti-balaka groups between Bozoum and Bocaranga, also in the north west, led to further atrocities.

Some Chadian pastoralists left their herds with the younger members of their group before reaching the border,⁶⁰ while others took their cattle with them across the border. Soldiers in the Chadian army confiscated one or two heads of cattle before allowing them to cross the border. Closure of the border by the Chadian authorities in May 2014 complicated the situation of pastoralists in southern Chad and overstocked the pastures in south west Chad, a mainly agricultural region.⁶¹ Although this blocked access for some pastoralists, others are planning to circumvent border security arrangements.⁶²

In Mbitoye, a town located on the Chad-CAR-Cameroon border, pastoralists could migrate into Cameroon during the dry season.⁶³ However, many pastoralists interviewed in southern Chad in September said they wanted to go back to CAR to save their herds: "We don't have a choice, we must follow our herds, they will die if we stay here".⁶⁴

The start of the Chadian transhumance to the CAR usually begins in October or November and so is already under way. Several scattered groups have already crossed

⁵⁸ In October 2012, after a meeting of the joint Chad-CAR commission in Ndjamen, the two countries signed an agreement to regulate the movements of pastoralists on both sides of the border. "Accord bilatéral de coopération technique entre la RCA et la République du Tchad en matière de mouvement de bétail", Ndjamen, 30 October 2012. The CAR crisis made this a dead letter. In May 2014, the World Bank revived the issue of regulating cross-border transhumance by organising a workshop in Ndjamen, which was attended by representatives of the Chadian pastoral platform, administrative authorities, mediation institutions, federations of pastoralists and farmers of the two countries and NGOs. "Echange RCA-TCHAD sur la prévention de conflits et l'accompagnement de la transhumance", World Bank, Ndjamen, 10-20 May 2014.

⁵⁹ Crisis Group interview, member of a humanitarian NGO working in the north of the country, Bangui, 18 October 2014.

⁶⁰ Chad and CAR refugee pastoralists in Chad said they left their herds in the CAR, especially in Faradzala, Ouandago, Kabo and Moyenne Sido. Crisis Group interviews, refugee pastoralists, Sido, 3 September 2014.

⁶¹ The Chadian authorities' announcement that they would open a humanitarian corridor along a recognised migration route was perhaps a gesture towards the pastoralists. The route is located far from centres of population in the CAR and is difficult for NGOs to access because of the lack of roads. It is located in the prefecture of Mandoul and used by many pastoralists every year on their way to CAR. Crisis Group interview, UN personnel, 3 October 2014.

⁶² Crisis Group interviews, Fulani pastoralists, Sido, Goré, Mbitoye, August 2014.

⁶³ Every year, a few Chadian pastoralists take their cattle into Cameroon, but most still see CAR as the Garden of Eden. Crisis Group interviews, researcher on pastoralism, Ndjamen, 23 August 2014 and representative of a Fulani association in Chad, Ndjamen, 24 August 2014.

⁶⁴ Crisis Group interviews, Fulani pastoralists, Sido and Mbitoye, August 2014.

the border and there have already been some incidents. In October, groups of pastoralists from Chad attacked the villages of Kava, Samba, Vafio and Behili on the Batangafo-Kabo road.⁶⁵ Even though some Chadian pastoralists say they want to make their way to the east and avoid the south of the country, contrary to their usual custom,⁶⁶ many of them insist on heading for Ouham and Ouham Pende, which are often the scene of clashes between pastoralists and local communities. Given the current context in the CAR and the small but real presence among Chadian pastoralists of herders with links to the military and administrative authorities of southern Chad,⁶⁷ this transhumance could easily turn into a military expedition.

III. Contain and Prevent Rural Guerrilla Warfare

The crisis in CAR has exacerbated old conflicts in rural areas and created new ones. The authorities, NGOs, donors and the ANDE created a forum in Bangui to discuss the problems of pastoralism in a conflict situation, but it has to face the following dilemma: policies to improve and regulate pastoralism have to be long term, but the start of another cycle of migration, intercommunal violence and the danger to peace represented by the Chadian transhumance that began a few weeks ago demands a quick response.

The measures proposed below are therefore short or medium term ones.⁶⁸ In the short term (three months), it is important to create an information network, investigate cattle trafficking and reduce cattle density in south-western Chad's grazing areas. In the medium term (six months), it will be important to promote mediation between farmers and pastoralists and reduce the socio-economic vulnerability of pastoralists by including the revival of the livestock farming sector in a comprehensive strategy for the socio-economic reconstruction of the country.

A. Short-term Actions

1. Create an early-warning information system

The conflicts related to cattle herding take place in rural areas, far from the eyes of the CAR authorities and international actors. An information network should therefore be created under the aegis of OCHA and the CAR livestock ministry in order to locate the areas at risk of violent confrontations between, on the one hand, the pastoralists and, on the other, the anti-balaka and/or local communities and act as an early-warning mechanism for the CAR authorities and international forces. In the medium term, this project should become a dynamic transhumance monitoring system.

Information about the routes taken by pastoralists requires, first and foremost, information about the pastoralists themselves. It is therefore essential to locate where pastoralists are, identify and meet their traditional leaders (Fulani or Arab) and estimate the size of their herds. The provision of services for pastoralists, such

⁶⁵ Crisis Group interview, humanitarian actor, Kabo, 15 October 2014.

⁶⁶ Crisis Group interviews, Fulani pastoralists, Sido and Mbitoye, August 2014.

⁶⁷ See Crisis Group Africa Report, *The Security Challenges of Pastoralism in Central Africa*, op. cit.

⁶⁸ By short and medium term, we mean three and six months respectively. These are reasonable periods in which to implement the projects outlined in this chapter.

as vaccination campaigns, is the best way to establish initial contact. NGOs are already involved in vaccinating cattle in several places in the CAR, where the security situation permits.⁶⁹ These initiatives should be replicated in other CAR towns as well as in southern Chad.⁷⁰

Donors should fund the recruitment of an expert in pastoralism for each of these NGOs in order to facilitate contact with pastoralists and gather information. This information should be sent to Bangui and Ndjamena. Making contact with Chadian pastoralists in southern Chad is also essential to understanding their intentions and identifying the routes they intend to take. Observations made by international forces when they contact pastoralists in the bush should also be sent to OCHA in Bangui.⁷¹

OCHA should use this information to produce a database and a map showing areas of danger.⁷² In the medium term, it will be necessary to implement a transhumance monitoring project based on the experience of projects in other countries in order to be able to provide updated information and a dynamic interpretation of the movements of pastoralists.⁷³

2. The fight against cattle trafficking

The fight against the predatory behaviour of the armed groups cannot ignore cattle theft, which is booming and is an important source of funding for combatants. In June 2014, Crisis Group recommended the creation of an anti-trafficking unit in MINUSCA to combat illegal trade in diamonds, gold and ivory.⁷⁴ This recommendation remains valid and should be extended to include trafficking in cattle. This unit should draw on the work of the UN Panel of Experts to conduct an investigation to identify the organisers of illicit cattle sales and the places to where herds are moved, especially in neighbouring countries.⁷⁵ The composition and UN mandate for this unit should allow it to conduct such an investigation and work with neighbouring countries to combat this kind of crime.

⁶⁹ Vaccinations campaigns are taking place in Ouandago, Kabo and Bozoum. Crisis Group interview, humanitarian actor, Bangui, 5 October 2014.

⁷⁰ The World Bank is funding a cattle vaccination program in southern Chad. This should be implemented quickly.

⁷¹ Conscious of the need to gather the maximum information about the pastoralists, the Bangui office of OCHA has already mapped transhumance routes in CAR. Crisis Group interview, OCHA official, Bangui, 5 October 2014.

⁷² The Information System on Pastoralism in the Sahel (SIPSA), implemented in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Chad and coordinated by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Livestock, Environment and Development Initiative (LEAD) is a good example. "Mise en œuvre d'un système d'information sur le pastoralisme au Sahel", LEAD and the Groupe-mment d'intérêt scientifique pôle pastoral zones sèches (PPZS).

⁷³ Such projects have been implemented in other sub-Saharan countries but must be preceded by discussions with pastoralists. See B.G.J.S. Sonneveld, M.A. Keyzer, K. Georgis, S. Pande, A. Seid Ali, A. Takele, "Following the Afar: Using remote tracking systems to analyze pastoralists' trekking routes", *Journal of Arid Environments*, vol 73, n°11 (2009), p. 1046-1050. Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 1 December 2014.

⁷⁴ See Crisis Group, *The Central African Crisis: From Predation to Stabilisation*, op. cit. Crisis Group interview, UN personnel, Bangui, 26 June 2014.

⁷⁵ See "Final Report of the Panel of Experts", op. cit.

3. Avoid overstocking grazing areas in south-western Chad

Pastures in south-western Chad are overstocked because of the arrival of CAR pastoralists and the Chad army's blocking of Chadian pastoralists who are trying to make their way across the border with CAR. At the start of the transhumance season, groups of unidentified armed men sometimes mount attacks on villages in northern CAR, supposedly as intimidation actions in order to stop these conflicts over resources degenerating and ensure that the migration of herds into CAR does not end in violence, the Chad, CAR and Cameroon authorities and NGOs responsible for supervising refugees should work together, under the aegis of MINUSCA, to identify secure grazing areas in the three countries to where they might direct pastoralists. That will of course require agreement between the authorities, host communities and pastoralists. Use of these areas would be temporary and would not involve any land management issues or require administrative decisions that would allow the long-term settlement of the pastoralists on those lands.

B. *Medium-term Actions*

1. Promote intercommunal mediation mechanisms

In north-western CAR and in some parts of the centre of the country, such as Bambari, conflicts over access to resources, combined with tension between groups of pastoralists and other sectors of the population, make it essential to revive the traditional committees that used to mediate between pastoralists and farmers. These committees were de facto dissolved by the crisis.⁷⁶

This system collapsed for two reasons: first, the persistence of intercommunal clashes and, second, the usurpation of the system by armed groups. The CAR's Emergency Action Plan for National Reconciliation, launched in May 2014, should make provision for resolving this problematic situation.⁷⁷ Where the security situation allows, NGOs specialising in conflict prevention should organise informal meetings between representatives of the different communities with a view to trying to revive traditional mediation mechanisms.⁷⁸ Discussions should focus on the consensual recognition of past customary agreements. International forces (MINUSCA, Sangaris) should aid such initiatives by including in their list of confidence-building measures a ban on armed group involvement in traditional mechanisms for promoting agreement and dialogue.

Meanwhile, donors should fund an awareness-raising program to disseminate calls for peace and messages reminding pastoralists and farmers of the mutual benefits of exchanging (for example, the use of animals for working and fertilising the fields) and their history of trading with each other (bartering meat and milk for agricultural products). These messages should be targeted particularly at women, who

⁷⁶ In CAR, these committees are also called pastoralist-farmer dispute management and resolution committees.

⁷⁷ Plan d'urgence pour la réconciliation nationale et la cohésion sociale, Ministry of Communication and National Reconciliation, Bangui, May 2014.

⁷⁸ In order to avoid distorting the traditional character of these committees, NGOs should not pay traditional chiefs for their mediation work. Crisis Group interviews, researcher on pastoralism, Ndjamena, 28 August 2014, and humanitarian actor, Bangui, 5 October 2014.

traditionally act as intermediaries between pastoralists and farmers.⁷⁹ Donor funding for community radios could facilitate the dissemination of such messages.

2. Reduce the vulnerability of pastoralists

Losing their herds is doubly hard for pastoralists: it means losing both their income and their social status. It plunges many of them into extreme poverty and encourages them to join armed groups. It is therefore indispensable to introduce measures to support vulnerable pastoralists, for example, by providing income generating activities and assessing the potential for reviving livestock farming sector.

Income generating activities should include pastoralists without herds of cattle who live in refugee camps in Chad and Cameroon as well as pastoralists without herds who are currently living in CAR. As the Fulani often do not want to consider manual work, it will be difficult to involve them in intensive labour projects.⁸⁰ Other ways of reintegrating them into the labour market must therefore be identified.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) should conduct a socio-economic study in a dozen places where pastoralists are concentrated in order to identify their needs and help them to take on an activity. Such a study should first evaluate their losses in order to assess whether the best option would be to restock their herds⁸¹ or train them in new livelihoods, notably in commerce, in accordance with local security and economic environments.⁸²

Replacement of livestock will not be possible unless the process respects traditional forms of solidarity in Fulani society. Pastoralists who have lost their herd because of natural disasters or epidemics benefit from very effective but codified solidarity mechanisms. Pastoralists, especially the Wodaabe, often use the practice of extending loans on trust, known as “habbanaa’e”. Pastoralists lend cows to other pastoralists in distress, the latter keep the offspring of the loaned cattle and return the cow to its owner. This practice favours a real ownership of the new cattle by the pastoralists.⁸³ Any initiatives taken by development actors and humanitarian NGOs to restock the herds of pastoralists should adopt these traditional mutual aid mechanisms. It may also be possible to train pastoralists in new livelihoods. Pastoralists who have lost their herds may, for example, consider commerce an honourable option.

⁷⁹ Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 27 November 2014.

⁸⁰ Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 8 December 2014.

⁸¹ The restocking of herds has been tried, for example, in Kenya, in a project that started in 1983 and another in Burundi in 2002. Following the loss of their herds, program beneficiaries were given cattle and/or goats so they could continue their pastoralist livelihood. There was criticism of the high cost of the Kenyan program but both projects increased the resilience of the beneficiary communities. Patrick Kilby, “Emergency Relief Programmes for Pastoral Communities”, *Development in Practice*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1993), p. 92-102, and “Programmes agricoles: de l’évaluation initiale à la mise en œuvre”, Action contre la faim – International Network, December 2008. It is important to evaluate the profitability threshold for herds before attempting to restock. Also, it is best to make loans rather than donations of cattle so that the pastoralists have enough financial motivation to take care of their cattle and build up thriving herds. Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 27 November 2014. However, the decision to restock herds depends on the local security situation. In rural areas, armed groups often attack pastoralists. Restocking herds in areas where armed groups regularly attack pastoralists endangers the latter.

⁸² In the Haut Mbomou region, Fulani pastoralists who have lost some of their herd to disease have received support from an NGO in an initiative designed to help them convert to sedentary agricultural activities. Crisis Group interview, humanitarian actor, Bangui, 3 October 2014.

⁸³ Crisis Group interview, expert on pastoralism, Paris, 8 December 2014.

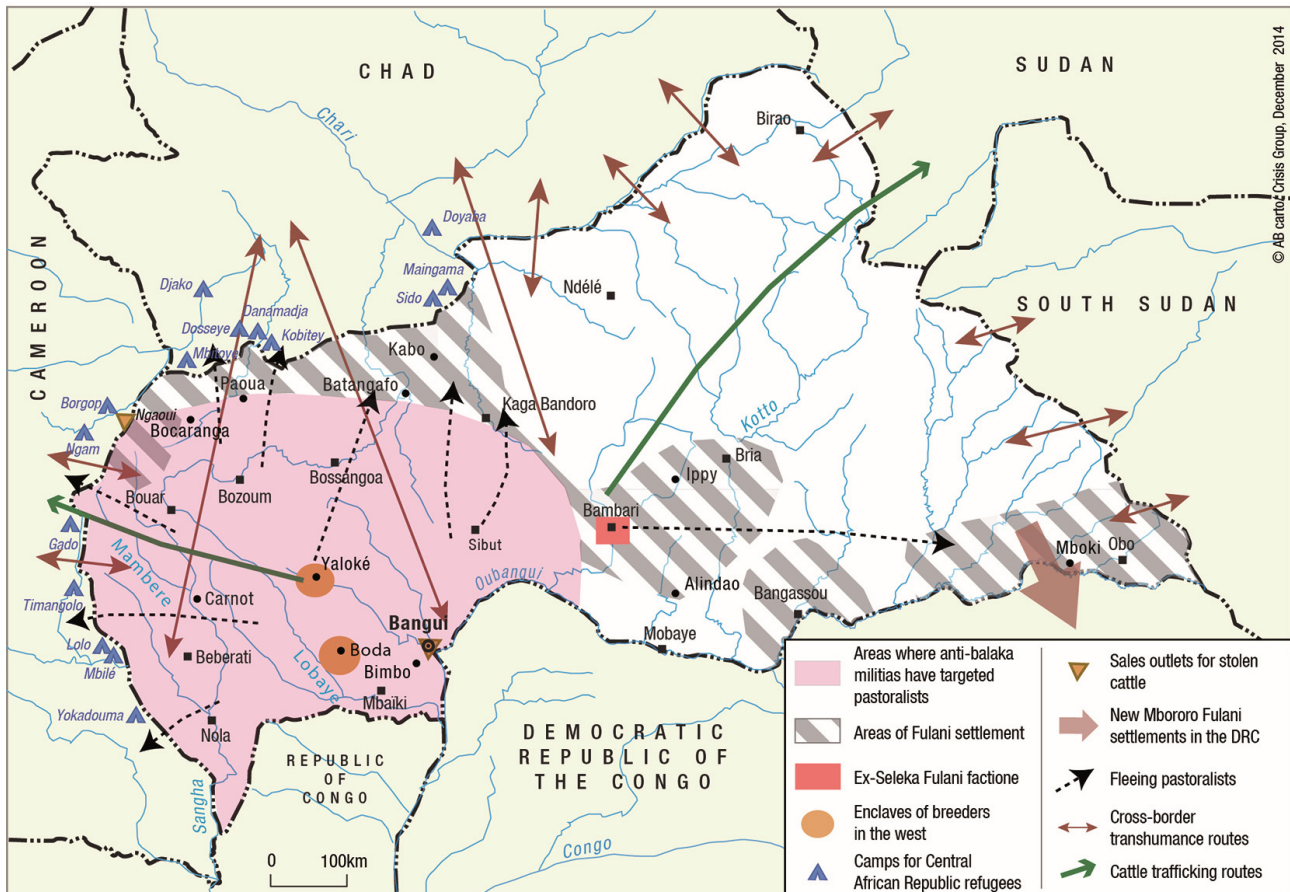
In general, the economic reintegration of pastoralists must form part of a comprehensive strategy to revive the economy and repair the social fabric. In many CAR towns, the markets are empty and the volume of trade has fallen drastically. Given the security context, the proposed FAO study should put forward a series of measures to revive livestock farming, cattle breeding and markets.

IV. Conclusion

While the international community's attention is focusing on Bangui, much of the CAR conflict is taking place elsewhere, in the country's rural areas. In addition to the clashes between anti-balaka and ex-Seleka militias, the rural areas are the scene of a confrontation over the wealth of poor people: cattle. This conflict within a conflict is particularly problematic because of its intercommunal nature and because it has roots that go back to before the crisis. Those who are trying to help CAR recover from the crisis must understand that the conflict is broader than the political and security games played out in the microcosm of the capital and that their strategy to end the crisis must take into account that the conflict also takes the form of a rural guerrilla war.

Nairobi/Brussels, 12 December 2014

Appendix A: Impact of the Central African Republic Crisis on the Pastoralist World



Appendix B: About the International Crisis Group

The International Crisis Group (Crisis Group) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 125 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, it produces analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers. Crisis Group also publishes CrisisWatch, a twelve-page monthly bulletin, providing a succinct regular update on the state of play in all the most significant situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world.

Crisis Group's reports and briefing papers are distributed widely by email and made available simultaneously on the website, www.crisisgroup.org. Crisis Group works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analyses and to generate support for its policy prescriptions.

The Crisis Group Board of Trustees – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring the reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. Crisis Group is co-chaired by former UN Deputy Secretary-General and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, and Dean of Paris School of International Affairs (Sciences Po), Ghassan Salamé.

Crisis Group's President & CEO, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, assumed his role on 1 September 2014. Mr. Guéhenno served as the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations from 2000-2008, and in 2012, as Deputy Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on Syria. He left his post as Deputy Joint Special Envoy to chair the commission that prepared the white paper on French defence and national security in 2013.

Crisis Group's international headquarters is in Brussels, and the organisation has offices or representation in 26 locations: Baghdad/Suleimaniya, Bangkok, Beijing, Beirut, Bishkek, Bogotá, Cairo, Dakar, Dubai, Gaza City, Islamabad, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Kabul, London, Mexico City, Moscow, Nairobi, New York, Seoul, Toronto, Tripoli, Tunis, Washington DC. Crisis Group currently covers some 70 areas of actual or potential conflict across four continents. In Africa, this includes Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe; in Asia, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan Strait, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; in Europe, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, North Caucasus, Serbia and Turkey; in the Middle East and North Africa, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Western Sahara and Yemen; and in Latin America and the Caribbean, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Venezuela.

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