



NHSMUN

National High School Model United Nations

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A Note on the NHSMUN Difference

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to NHSMUN 2027! We are Armen Bagdassarian and Sabeeh Mirza, and we are elated to serve as this year's Secretaries-General. Thank you for choosing to attend NHSMUN, the world's largest and most diverse high school Model United Nations conference. As a space for collaboration, consensus, and compromise, NHSMUN strives to transform today's brightest thinkers, speakers, and collaborators into tomorrow's leaders. We believe that an emphasis on education through simulation is paramount to the Model UN experience.

Realism and Accuracy: Although a perfect simulation of the UN is never possible, we believe that one of the core educational responsibilities of MUN conferences is to educate students about how the UN System works. We strive to invite real UN, NGO, and field experts into each committee through our committee speakers program. Moreover, we arrange meetings between students and the actual UN Permanent Mission of the country they are representing. These exclusive resources are only available due to IMUNA's formal association with the United Nations Department of Global Communications and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. No other conference goes so far to deeply immerse students into the UN System.

Educational Emphasis: At the heart of NHSMUN lies education and compromise. Part of what makes NHSMUN special is its diverse delegate base. As such, when NHSMUN distributes awards, we strongly de-emphasize their importance in comparison to the educational value of Model UN. In particular, our daises look for and promote constructive leadership and diplomacy that strive toward consensus, as real ambassadors do in the United Nations.

Research and a Dedicated Staff: Our staffers care deeply about delegates' experiences and what they take away from their time at NHSMUN. Our Directors spend over six months preparing Background Guides, in addition to Update Briefs written to reflect the rapidly changing nature of the topics to be discussed. Our staffers are trained rigorously to provide the best conference experience possible. Our daises provide thoughtful comments on submitted position papers. Our staff aims to tailor the committee experience to delegates' reflections and research, but also to facilitate an environment where all delegates' thoughts can be heard.

Empowering Participation: The UN relies on the voices of all of its member states to create resolutions. This is our philosophy at NHSMUN too. Our Rules of Procedure and our staff focus on making every voice in the committee heard, regardless of country assignment or skill level. Additionally, unlike many other conferences, we also emphasize delegate participation after the conference. Delegates spend countless hours researching topics critical to the UN and broader international sphere.

Delegates, it is our sincerest hope that your time at NHSMUN will be thought-provoking and stimulating. NHSMUN is an incredible time to learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities. We look forward to seeing you work both as students and global citizens at the conference.

Best,

Armen Bagdassarian
Secretary-General

Sabeeh Mirza
Secretary-General

Position Paper Requirements

Delegate research and preparation is a critical element of attending NHSMUN and enjoying the debate experience. We have provided this Background Guide to introduce the topics that will be discussed in your committee. We encourage and expect each of you to critically explore the selected topics and be able to identify and analyze their intricacies upon arrival to the conference.

The task of preparing for the conference can be challenging. To assist delegates, we have updated our [Beginner Delegate Guide](#) and [Advanced Delegate Guide](#). These guides contain more detailed instructions on how to prepare a position paper and excellent sources that delegates can use for research. Use these resources to your advantage. They can help transform a sometimes overwhelming task into what it should be: an engaging, interesting, and rewarding experience.

To accurately represent a country, delegates must be able to articulate its policies. Accordingly, NHSMUN requires each delegation (the one or two delegates representing a country in a committee) to write a position paper for each topic on the committee's agenda. More information about how to write and format position papers can be found in the [Research Guide](#). To summarize, position papers should be structured into three sections.

I: Topic Background – This section should describe the history of the topic as it would be described by the delegate's country. Delegates do not need to give an exhaustive account of the topic, but rather focus on the details that are most important to the delegation's policy and proposed solutions.

II: Country Policy – This section should discuss the delegation's policy regarding the topic. Each paper should state the policy in plain terms and include the relevant statements, statistics, and research that support the effectiveness of the policy. Comparisons with other global issues are also appropriate here.

III. Proposed Solutions – This section should detail the delegation's proposed solutions to address the topic. Descriptions of each solution should be thorough. Each idea should clearly connect to the specific problem it aims to solve and identify potential obstacles to implementation and how they can be avoided. The solution should be a natural extension of the country's policy.

Each topic's position paper should be **no more than 10 pages long** double-spaced with standard margins and 12 point font size. This is a maximum; **3–5 pages per topic is often a suitable length**. The paper must be written from the perspective of your assigned country and should articulate the policies you will espouse at the conference.

Each delegation is responsible for submitting position papers on or before **February 26, 2027**. If a delegate wishes to receive detailed feedback from the committee's dais, their position paper must be submitted on or before **February 5, 2027**. The papers received by this earlier deadline will be reviewed by the committee dais and returned before February 26. Instructions on how to submit position papers will be shared directly with faculty advisors.

Submission instructions for position papers will be sent to faculty advisers via email. If delegations are unable to submit their position papers on time, please contact us at nhsmun@imuna.org.

Delegations that do not submit position papers will be ineligible for awards.

Committee History

The UN Security Council and General Assembly established the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC) in 2005 as an intergovernmental advisory body made up of sovereign states and relevant organizations.¹ The UNPBC's main purpose is to advise the Security Council and General Assembly on ways to promote, maintain, and encourage peace around the world. It does so by bringing together governments, UN bodies, donors, and other partners, and by advising and advocating for nationally led peacebuilding efforts.² The UNPBC focuses on countries who have recently faced war or conflict and are in the fragile state of rebuilding their governmental and economic systems.

The UNPBC works to achieve goals of peacebuilding set by individual countries. Therefore, sovereignty is an important concept to the UNPBC. It is also important that the Commission collaborates with countries recovering from war and conflict.³ UNPBC assists countries until a system of lasting peace is established or officials from the country tell the UNPBC to leave.⁴ The Commission can help mobilize support and encourage predictable funding for peacebuilding, but the separate UN Peacebuilding Fund finances peacebuilding projects.⁵

As an “intergovernmental advisory body,” the UNPBC is made up of sovereign states elected by both of its parent organizations: the General Assembly and the Security Council. It also includes members selected by the Economic and Social Council. It includes the largest contributors to the UN's annual budget and accessory military personnel. Unlike some other bodies in the United Nations, the UNPBC includes relevant organizations such as international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, and others who have knowledge and influence on the issues discussed.⁶

Some of the Peacebuilding Commission's recent work includes creating a space for discussions on the ongoing establishment of South Sudan and their efforts to maintain peace. It also advises the Security Council on the transition of government in Burkina Faso after the coup d'état of the previous government. They have also assisted Burundi, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Pacific Islands, Timor-Leste, and more.⁷

The Commission is a transient organization that recognizes the constantly dynamic state of the world and the need for cooperation between countries to respond to and address regional and international issues.⁸

¹ “Peacebuilding Commission,” United Nations, accessed October 26, 2023, www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/repertoire/peacebuilding-commission.

² Rosalie Azar, “The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission: An Initial Assessment,” *Making Peace* (2011): 93-102, link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137002129_6.

³ Ulrich Schneekener and Silke Weinlich, *The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission* (Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs, September 2005), www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/255971/1/2005C38.pdf.

⁴ United Nations, “Security Council Unanimously Adopts Resolution 2282 (2016) on Review of United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture,” news release, April 27, 2016, press.un.org/en/2016/sc12340.doc.htm.

⁵ “Programme of Work,” United Nations, accessed October 26, 2023, www.un.org/peacebuilding/commission/programme-of-work.

⁶ “Chapter V: Subsidiary organs of the Security Council,” United Nations, accessed September 23, 2023, www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/2004-2007/04-07_05.pdf#page=76.

⁷ United Nations, “Peacebuilding Commission.”

⁸ United Nations, “Programme of Work.”

TOPIC A

UNPBC | NHSMUN 2027

The Situation in the Central African Republic



Introduction

The Central African Republic (CAR) has faced years of instability due to recurring violence and internal conflict. In 2013, an armed group named Seleka launched a coup on the country's government. In response to the violence, a group of mostly Christian militia groups, known as the Anti-Balaka coalition, formed. They acted upon the violence with more violence, also becoming hostile towards the Muslim community. This caused mass displacement and resulted in many human rights violations. As a result, the country fell into a humanitarian crisis.¹

One of many major setbacks to peacebuilding came during the December 2020 elections.² Renewed violence and armed movements weakened the political process. Despite the instability, however, the elections carried on. This event displayed how the country's politics are often tied to escalations in violence. Thus, systemic change is critical to peace-building efforts.³

The humanitarian crisis in the CAR has affected civilians across the country, but its consequences have been particularly severe for vulnerable and marginalized communities. Widespread insecurity, poverty, damaged infrastructure, and limited access to essential services have undermined the well-being of the public. Muslim communities, in particular, have frequently experienced violence and forced displacement, including massacres, ethnic cleansing, and discrimination. In some areas, Muslim civilians have been treated as foreigners within their own country and forced to flee their homes.⁴ Women and children likewise remain among the most vulnerable when it comes to violence, abuse, and trauma. They also face significant barriers to healthcare and education.⁵ The effects of the crisis also extend beyond the CAR's borders. Neighboring countries have taken in a large number of refugees from the CAR and faced the resulting effects of cross-border instability and regional violence.

Understanding the current crisis requires an understanding of the historical factors that have contributed to continued conflict. Religious and sectarian divisions have played an important

role, as armed groups have used identity-based justifications to attack and gather support.⁶ Territorial disputes have also contributed to the conflict. Armed actors also compete for control over land, roads, and natural resources. These struggles reinforce sectarian tensions, making the humanitarian crisis difficult to separate from the country's broader security challenges.

Today, these factors continue to contribute to sectarian violence and restrict the delivery of humanitarian aid.⁷ Political and economic instability have weakened state institutions and limited the government's ability to provide essential services. Elections and struggles over political leadership have also contributed to renewed conflict.⁸ As a result, many people continue to lack reliable access to basic necessities, including food, clean water, healthcare, and shelter. The combination of ongoing violence, weak institutions, and limited resources has allowed the humanitarian crisis to persist.⁹

The CAR faces one of the world's most severe, yet under-reported humanitarian emergencies, with high levels of displacement, food insecurity, and attacks against civilians. The continuation of violence and lawlessness has also weakened the state and made it more difficult to deliver humanitarian assistance.¹⁰ Bringing greater attention to the crisis is essential for mobilizing humanitarian aid while also addressing the military and political challenges that contribute to continued instability. A better understanding of these issues can help inform effective strategies

for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and long-term stability in the Central African Republic.¹¹

History and Description of the Issue

SECTARIAN VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL EXCLUSION

One of the main forces driving conflict in the CAR is religion. Religious violence occurs when religious goals are used to justify conflict. Religious terrorism is considered a form of religious violence aimed against civilians, meant to cause fear.¹² Today, around 73 percent of the CAR's population practices Christianity, and another 14 percent practices Islam.¹³ The current conflict cannot be explained by religious differences alone. Armed groups have used religious identity to mobilize support and target civilians, while political exclusion, weak institutions, and competition for territory and resources have also driven violence. For a long time, indigenous religions dominated the region that became the modern CAR. In the early 1800s, Islam began to spread into Central Africa through Muslim merchants traveling the Trans-Saharan trade route.¹⁴ But in the 1880s, European colonists moved into the region, and France quickly became the main power. Under French colonial rule, Christian missionaries arrived, and Christianity became increasingly popular over the next several decades. At the same time, the colonial government viewed Muslim settlers as foreign, increasing religious tensions at the time.¹⁵

Eventually, the country gained independence from France in 1960. However, political power and growth still remained focused on the Christian majority, marginalizing the Muslim community. Over the following decades, the government failed to provide them with proper roads, funding, healthcare, or education. In Bangui, the country's capital, Muslims were excluded and not seen as part of the national

identity.¹⁶ As injustice and exclusion brewed, small Muslim rebel groups began to form in the North. In late 2012, they eventually joined forces to form a rebel militia group called the Séléka alliance. They felt that the government had neglected its Muslim community. They began to seize power in the north and center of the country and managed to take control of the capital. In March 2013, they overthrew François Bozizé's government, and Séléka leader Michel Djotodia declared himself president. He became the first Muslim leader in CAR's history.¹⁷ However, after 10 months in power, Djotodia lacked international recognition, and he failed to de-escalate the country's state of crisis. He was forced to give up his position in January 2014.¹⁸

Following the Séléka coup, "Anti-Balaka" groups were formed. The Anti-Balaka militia is a terrorist group composed of Christian fighters. At first, they formed as a self-defense group. Over time, they became an extremist militia with strong nationalist views.¹⁹ They believed that they needed to protect the local population from the Séléka. Thus, the Anti-Balaka launched violent attacks on the Séléka and on Muslim civilians. They played a key role in driving internal conflicts and creating instability in the country. They have justified their actions using religion.²⁰ Their stated aim is to rid the country of Islamic presence and establish a Christian-based state.²¹

This conflict has hit Muslims in the northern CAR region especially hard. Muslims have been subjected to execution, mutilation, and home burnings. Hundreds of mosques have been destroyed. People have been forced to evacuate from neighborhoods where their families have lived for generations. Around 80 percent of the country's Muslim minority was displaced within the first two years of the conflict. In towns like Yaloke, the Muslim population dropped from around 30,000 to fewer than 500.²² Displacement has also affected neighboring states. More than 1 million people have been displaced by the conflict.²³ The majority of these refugees have gone to Cameroon and the DRC, straining those countries' ability to provide

assistance.²⁴

Additionally, the entry of Sudanese refugees and internally displaced people has strained resources further, especially in remote areas outside government control. Around 3.4 million people in the country, roughly 70 percent of the country's population, need humanitarian assistance.²⁵ Many communities lack access to essential resources, making it impossible to grow crops, trade, or access basic services. With little support, they face severe food insecurity, displacement, and rising prices.

The consequences of this religious-framed violence are long-term and severe. The CAR now faces a death rate about twice as high as in any other country.²⁶ Human rights groups and UN agencies describe the atrocities in the country as war crimes and crimes against humanity.²⁷ The ongoing instability continues to block efforts at rebuilding, reconciliation, and economic recovery. Moreover, it enables armed groups to continue engaging in violence and maintaining control.

The conflict in the CAR shows how religious identities became a label used to violently target certain groups. Political exclusion and weak institutions further strengthened religious

divisions. In this cycle, security measures alone cannot reduce violence. Political inclusion, rule of law, and socioeconomic investment are key to reducing violence and armed mobilization.

TERRITORIAL DISPUTE & EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The conflict in the CAR is not only a struggle over power. It's also a struggle over land and natural resources. In the country's unstable political environment, armed groups use territory as a source of control and income.²⁸ Civilians, miners, and herders are caught in the middle of this conflict.

CAR is a landlocked country. It is bordered by Chad and Sudan in the north, South Sudan to the east, Cameroon to the west, and The Republic of Congo and DRC to the south. This geographical position exposes the country to cross-border armed movement, trafficking, and regional spillovers, which occurs when economic, political, or military events in one country cross borders and affect neighboring countries.²⁹ Rather than staying contained, the conflict deepens as it spreads across these borders.

This problem has manifested itself through

Refugee Camp in PK3, Bria

Credit: Freeman Sipila (VOA)



territorial fragmentation. Fragmentation is a process in which a single state breaks apart into smaller disconnected units. In the CAR, this fragmentation is seen in segregated zones of control across cities and regions. Ex-Seleka and anti-balaka groups have split and taken control of different zones of influence. They have turned parts of the country into competing armed spaces, demonstrating that territorial control is not only a military matter – it also determines who can tax roads, dominate markets, and access resources.³⁰

The conflict between militias also has territorial and social dimensions. These groups began as political-military forces but later grew to be influential power brokers. They claimed land and resources while defending or attacking communities tied to different identities and livelihood systems.³¹ This is why the conflict is often described as both sectarian and economic. Control of territory is not driven by ideology alone. Instead, militias also fight for survival and resource extraction.

The exploitation of natural resources intensifies this crisis. It creates motives for armed groups to stay armed. Studies have shown that armed groups tax trade, mining, transportation,

agriculture, livestock, and other natural resources. In addition, external bodies have gained influence over mines and livestock areas.³² This shifts the conflict from a domestic war into an international conflict. The CAR's crisis today is the result of weak state authority and the exploitation of natural resources.³³

The country's territorial dispute can be understood as a conflict over who governs space, and over who benefits from land and controls the country's wealth. Mining zones, cattle routes, and border areas are not separate issues. They are part of the same conflict system that keeps civilians vulnerable, and makes peace difficult to secure.³⁴

Herding is an essential way of life in the CAR. It accounts for around 15 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the country. It also employs 35 percent of the country's rural population.³⁵ However, because herders' nomadic way of life and culture are different, settled populations tend to see them as foreigners. Additionally, authorities accuse them of being the main culprits in rural armed conflict. Furthermore, most herders practice Islam. This makes them more likely to be affected by the stigma attached to the country's Muslim



Fulani herder leading cattle

Credit: 4toscenethesis

community.³⁶ Even though herders contribute to the country's economy, herding and livestock are deeply affected. Armed groups tax cattle routes, extort herders, and attack travel routes. Since the coup in 2012, the violence associated with this form of livestock management has been a driving cause of atrocities in the country.³⁷

Although a peace agreement was attempted in 2019, violence towards herders has increased by more than half. Armed groups are at the center of this issue. Some claim to protect herders, while others are hostile towards them. The causes of violence aren't all the same. Some incidents are linked to land disputes between herders and farmers. Others are linked to communal rivalries between nomadic and settled populations. Despite its great economic potential, the sector remains underdeveloped. This is due to the persistence of rural conflict and the lack of pastoral services.³⁸

The exploitation of mineral resources is also an issue. Mining is central to the struggle of territorial dispute. The CAR's gold and diamonds are among the country's most valuable resources. The extraction sector has been linked to armed control, illegal taxation, and illicit trade. Mines become targets because they are quick to generate money, especially where the state is weak or absent. Mining in the country provides a living for many people – the sector was already 90 percent artisanal before the 2013 conflict. However, most miners make little to no profit, while elites make large profits through taxes and informal payments.³⁹

The mining business has been dominated by foreigners, such as West African and Muslim merchants. For example, Seleka leaders took over several diamond mines after the coup in 2012. Nonetheless, throughout the years, the CAR has exported around 32 percent of the country's total export value. As a consequence, the struggle between Seleka and anti-balaka has shaped the territorial conflict. These armed groups have defined space through identity, fear, and retaliation. This has made control of territory

part of the war itself. Even now, the damage caused from these conflicts remains visible. Different mining communities are pushed out, taxed, or threatened. This all depends on which armed group dominates an area.⁴⁰

The conflict in the CAR reveals that territorial dispute and resource exploitation are not separate problems. They drive violence and armed groups. They weaponize land, mining zones, and herding routes to generate income, enforce control, and deepen divisions along borders. Herders and miners remain trapped in a cycle of threats, stigma, and massacres. External actors further complicate the crisis. They gain influence over valuable resources and turn an internal struggle into a deeper geopolitical conflict. Civilians will stay vulnerable if territory and natural resources remain tools for profit, rather than foundations for development.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY

The CAR faces pressing political instability. After the Seleka and Anti-Balaka militias emerged in 2012, the situation worsened. The conflict's outcomes were not temporary. The crisis changed the country's political scene. This instability became key in the country's conflict and it has changed how national peace agreements are made. Now, the CAR is faced with economic and political weakness. As a consequence, it created a state where armed groups controlled the local governments.⁴¹ The armed groups in the country included: the 3R, the Union for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC), and the Coalition of Patriots for Change(CPC).

The UPC was formed in 2014. Its leader was Ali Darassa, a rebel Fulani leader. The UPC was composed of a major Muslim community. And it contained a small group of ex-Seleka members. Their initial goal was to protect ethnic communities. They also sought to secure territory and cattle from rival militias.⁴² But their goals soon shifted over time. The UPC began to seize gold mines and diamond fields. They

also illegally taxed transit networks. And they were responsible for illicit arms trafficking. In 2020, they joined forces with the CPC. This union moved their goal to disrupt the presidential elections.⁴³

Moreover, the 3R was founded in 2015. It was an armed group composed of Fulani people. They formed as a self-defense militia to protect Fulani herders from bandits.⁴⁴ However, they evolved into a rebel group. The 3R abused their authority and power. And they were involved in territorial control and human rights abuses.⁴⁵ Lastly, the CPC formed in 2020. Former President Bozizé led the group after he was not allowed to run in the elections. The CPC included former members of the Seleka and Anti-Balaka. Their main goal was to overthrow President Touadéra's government.⁴⁶ The creation of the CPC led to the collapse of the 2019 peace agreement. Known as *The Accord Politique pour la Paix et la Réconciliation en République Centrafricaine* (APPR-RCA). This caused intense armed conflict and increased violence in the country.⁴⁷

Throughout its history the CAR experienced much political turmoil. This included six separate coups. The first coup broke out in 1966. It was carried out by Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa. He overthrew President David Dacko in a military takeover. This led to Bokassa setting up a military dictatorship. Bokassa abolished the old constitution. He named himself president-for-life and turned the republic into an empire. His reign led the country into extreme debt. This caused instability and widespread violence.⁴⁸ The 1979 coup followed as a consequence. This coup was led by former President Dacko. Backed by the

French military, Dacko ousted Bokassa's empire. This restored stability in the republic.

After this, the 1981 coup happened. General André Kolingba oversaw this coup. He deposed President Dacko's government, suspending the constitution. This led to a military rule in the country, once again. Kolingba attempted to obstruct the transition to elected government in the early 1990s. To maintain power, he tried to illegally block the elections. However, international pressure forced him to step down. This made Kolingba give up power to Ange-Felix Patasse. A decade later, the 2003 coup happened. It lasted from October 2002 to March 2003. The coup was led by General François Bozizé. He forced President Patassé from power, after months of violence. This coup caused a lasting impact and destruction to the country.⁴⁹

During his terms, security and standards of living scarcely improved. His government faced many political and economic conflicts. They were accused by human rights groups of unlawful killing and torture.⁵⁰ This instability weakened the country's government. It resulted in civil wars and prolonged sectarian violence. However, the 2013 Seleka coup marked a new phase of conflict. This coup drove out President François Bozizé after ten years in power. Later, Michel Djotodia, Seleka leader, placed himself as president. But, he failed to control the violent conflict where religion was used as a marker for political exclusion.⁵¹

This government did not establish stable authority. Seleka leaders let their members commit war crimes against civilians. They carried out widespread lootings, killings, and sexual

After independence, the CAR endured decades of political unrest.

violence. Human Rights Watch recorded 305 cases of sexual slavery by Seleka members. The UN reported over 2,500 cases of sexual violence in 2014 alone.⁵² Additionally, the UN recorded around 3,000 to 6,000 people killed between 2013 and 2014.⁵³ As a result, an estimated 800,000 people were displaced.⁵⁴ This hostile approach to power initiated the Anti-balaka militia to form. A Christian militia that would later create larger political instability in the country.

The conflict between Séléka and Anti-Balaka created a weak political environment. Territorial control became more important than national unity. Armed groups split into competing factions with different agendas. This made it harder to reach common ground in political negotiations. And it has made it difficult to enact peace agreements. Today, this political rift remains visible. Different regions of the CAR are dominated by different armed groups.⁵⁵ Each one taxing roads and controlling markets, independent of the central government's authority. This collapse of state authority has allowed armed groups to thrive. Seeing as they operate in a climate of corruption and little enforcement.⁵⁶

Following 2013, the lack of authority for crimes

committed in the CAR has fueled mistrust within the country. Victims have received no justice for executions, armed force, or sexual violence. The lack to take action undermines any attempt at peace, allowing armed leaders to maintain control without fear of legal consequences. This is due to the country's weak judicial system. Because of the fragile security, there is limited enforcement to conduct investigations. This makes prosecution difficult. In some cases, governments have been involved in abuses.⁵⁷ This further weakens accountability efforts. As a result, those responsible are often free of punishment.

After Seleka's fall in late 2013 a temporary government was established. It was an internal process led by the National Transitional Council (CNT). This was the country's interim parliament. The CNT placed Catherine Samba-Panza as interim president in 2014. However, this government lacked capacity to enforce real political reforms, especially when it came to peace negotiations.⁵⁸ Political and military actors only used them to secure funding and national profile.⁵⁹

Furthermore, the CAR underwent an electoral process from 2015 to 2016, leading to the start of a new government under President

Anti-Balaka militia

Credit: Bagassi Koura



Faustin-Archange Touadera. Despite the new government, the growing political instability remained. The timing of the elections was dictated by the international community. They did not consider the larger scale of the conflict. This led to external political agendas that were not always aligned with local needs.⁶⁰

The political instability in the CAR has weakened trust between communities. Armed groups gained power while political identity became linked to ethnicity and religion. This has made civilians view politics with fear, survival, and exclusion in mind. In this environment, the country struggled to present itself as a protective authority. This has caused a distance between citizens and public institutions. The growing political instability has affected the country's ability to provide basic services and to maintain effective governance. In many areas, schools, hospitals, and offices stopped functioning.⁶¹ They became inaccessible because of insecurity. This created a setting where communities relied more on armed groups or humanitarian organizations than on the central government.⁶²

Another major consequence has been the breaking apart of the political landscape. Instead of a unified national political system, the country has developed a pattern of competing armed factions. These groups control borders and trade routes. This gives them power and military influence.⁶³ As a result, political negotiation becomes less about rebuilding the country and more about dividing power among those who control territory. This has made peace agreements fragile. Many groups enter negotiations to preserve their own interests rather than to support long-term stability.

Overall, the political instability in the CAR has created a fragile political state where public trust remains severely weakened. Instead of supporting development, the government has been shaped by conflict management and external aid. The result is a country where instability is not a short-term crisis. It is a lasting conflict that continues to affect daily life, public

institutions, and the future of peace-building.

ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

The CAR went into economic decline after the 2013 crisis. The government weakened and income fell as violence struck the economy. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) also took a sharp fall. The conflict between militias also hurt trade and public services. In a study comparing the CAR's economy with a model of how it might have developed without the civil war, World Bank researchers estimated that GDP per person was 45.3 to 47.8 percent lower from 2013 to 2022. They estimated a cumulative GDP loss of USD 29.7 billion to USD 32.4 billion over that period. Even under a more conservative estimate, the economy was 35.3 percent smaller than the model's conflict-free projection.⁶⁴

The Seleka coup and the rise of violence broke supply chains. It affected major trade routes, such as the Douala-Bangui road, making them almost unreliable.⁶⁵ This also reduced the country's exports and imports while raising the cost of doing business. This is because roads and ports became unsafe, causing some merchants to abandon their trade routes and to reduce the volumes of merchandise they were buying and selling.⁶⁶ As a result, there became a shortage of goods while prices increased in urban and rural markets. These factors led the CAR into a large economic downfall.

Violence and displacement disrupted key economic sectors. These included agriculture, informal trade, and mining. This cut regular income for rural homes. It also cut export earnings. These earnings could have kept the country's economy stable. But recovery in these sectors are faced with insecurity, especially as militia groups tax trade routes and natural resources. This danger pushes away workers and investors. As a result, a lack of money and a stable market block progress.⁶⁷

Economic instability in the CAR is chronic

and complex. Factors include fragile public institutions, repeated violence, and reliance on scarce natural resources. For example, the country relies heavily on mining. This has become dangerous as illicit mining has become more common. Armed groups have taken over diamond and gold fields by force.⁶⁸ These minerals go straight into the black market, funding regional weapons purchases.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the country also relies on agriculture. The agricultural sector employs around 80 percent of the country's population.⁷⁰ Due to the conflict, farming has gone from being commercial to being for survival. This generates little economic value and leaves the country dependent on foreign exports. An estimated 20 percent of the country's food needs to be imported.⁷¹ Relying on external aid has further contributed to the economic crisis.

CAR's external relations and trade also collapsed after the 2013 crisis due to the fall of formal trade and lasting insecurity. CAR has reduced regional integration and foreign investment, leading to a lack of diverse economic activity.⁷² However, regional partners and countries providing aid have stayed engaged. An example is the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). CEMAC helps drive regional trade with bordering countries.⁷³ Nonetheless, frequent instability in the region makes these partners' efforts less effective, raises the cost for aid, and makes delivery for development programs hard to get.

After the 2013 crisis, the country's ability to raise funds collapsed. This was a result of the fall of imports and exports. The cost of basic services and security rose as they became

scarce. The country had few resources left for education, health, or infrastructure. These investments are key to long-term growth and national unity. Furthermore, the small tax base and weak administration made it hard to enact reforms. This made it hard to attract the private investment needed to rebuild key sectors.⁷⁴

As a result, the economy in the CAR has lacked growth. The World Bank compared the country's actual GDP with a model in a conflict-free situation. The study showed a large loss in output over time, amounting to tens of billions of dollars. The country's GDP per person also saw a sharp fall. This decline reflected a structural collapse.⁷⁵ Development banks warn that the country faces a harsh economic reality unless there are major security and governance reforms.⁷⁶ Between 2015 and 2019, the World Bank reported small periods of recovery in the CAR.⁷⁷ This was due to the peaceful transition of power in 2015 when President Touadera was elected. The transition led to state authorities creating financial reform programs to support the country's economy.⁷⁸ The World Bank backed these efforts to help restore economic recovery.⁷⁹ However, continued insecurity and weak politics slowed the reforms' progress.

The impact of the country's economic instability on civilians has been grave. As of September 2025, WHO and UNHCR estimated the internally displaced population at approximately 442,000 to 445,500 in the CAR.⁸⁰ The country also hosts an estimated 63,000 refugees with many coming from Sudan, the DRC, and Chad.⁸¹ As a result, this made resources scarce.

Displacement and violence have increased poverty, food insecurity, and the need for humanitarian aid.

Finally, the crisis has changed families' financial habits. To survive, they have sold off their assets and reduced their food consumption.⁸² This proves that the crisis in the CAR is more than just economic. It is also humanitarian.

Current Status

POLITICAL AND DEMOCRATIC TENSIONS

In the CAR, political and democratic tensions have remained fragile. After the Seleka coup in 2013, the country's politics have become unstable. State institutions have weakened and armed groups have gained more influence. While several improvements have been made to the country's government, progress is slow.

Following efforts for peace, President Touadéra made a few changes to the government. In July 2023 a referendum to the constitution was announced. The reform consisted of removing presidential term limits. If approved, it allowed Touadéra to run as many times as he could.⁸³ However, opposition parties protested the referendum vote. They called it a constitutional coup and that it lacked transparency, claiming it was designed to keep President Touadéra in power for life.⁸⁴ In addition, the United States expressed concern about the voting process. The United States State Department noted how there was low voter participation for the referendum. They also voiced how free and fair elections are needed for a democracy to thrive.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, 95 percent of voters supported the change.⁸⁶ This allowed President Touadéra to run for president for a third term.

The CAR held formal elections in December 2025. It was one of the most extensive elections done in the CAR.⁸⁷ With the vast majority of civilians voting for him, President Touadéra secured a third term. However, the opposition accused the government of electoral fraud and raised concerns about further repression.⁸⁸ As a

result, the UN peacekeeping mission, MINUSCA, provided technical and security support for the election. MINUSCA provided technical, logistical, and security support for the elections.⁸⁹ International and regional observers reported that voting generally took place peacefully, although there were logistical problems, isolated security incidents, and irregularities. The opposition continued to contest the result.⁹⁰

Today, the CAR has gone through partial state recovery without full democratic union. Elections have resumed and the presidency remains, but armed groups are still active. The state is stronger than in 2013 but remains fragile. After the 2025 elections, 427,000 people remained internally displaced in the region.⁹¹ The OCHA also estimates that in 2026, 2.3 million people will be in need of humanitarian aid, accounting for about 43 percent of the total population.⁹² This issue is a major obstacle in the way of sustainable recovery. Additionally, the removal of presidential terms and political discourse may result in violence. Beyond protests, it could lead to further intervention by the military.⁹³

Certain regions in the CAR remain under the control of armed groups. These groups largely formed due to political exclusion, rebellion, or self-defense. For example *Retour, Reclamation, et Rehabilitation* (3R) formed in late 2015 to protect herders from the anti-balaka. They took control over the northwest region of the country and later evolved into an armed group who claimed territorial control, conducting violent attacks.⁹⁴ Another example is the *Unite pour la Paix en Centrafrique* (UPC). The UPC formed through ex-Seleka members. This group has used local control of roads and mining sites to operate. Lastly, the local Zande militia formed due to tensions with other communities. They compete over land and resources with smaller local militias. This has complicated control over the ground, making peace harder to restore.⁹⁵

The government has made efforts to reign in armed groups through negotiation. Peace agreements often reduce violence for a period

of time. However, many agreements are not effectively enforced, and they frequently fail to turn into lasting peace efforts. This was the case with the APPR-RCA. The APPR-RCA attempted to unify the government and several armed groups.⁹⁶ However, the attempted CPC coup in 2020 undermined the state's ability to enforce terms. Despite this, the government continued attempting to work with these groups alongside regional and international mediators.

After some time, the UN reported that several armed groups disbanded between 2023 and 2025.⁹⁷ This was made possible through disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts. In this process, members of armed groups voluntarily give up their arms and work with authorities to disband the group. In 2018, MINUSCA and the government established the National Program for Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Repatriation. Since then, almost 7,000 ex-combatants have been disarmed.⁹⁸ In 2025, both the 3R and the UPC signed agreements with MINUSCA and the government to join the DDR process.⁹⁹ During July 2026 alone, 134 ex-3R members joined DDR efforts.¹⁰⁰ This has further contributed to peace consolidation and has reduced the circulation of

weapons in the country.

Additionally, the CAR's relations with bordering countries are shaped by security and cross-border instability. Chad, Cameroon, Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have all been affected by conflict spillover. The increase of refugees and armed groups have resulted in these effects.¹⁰¹ For example, Cameroon is the CAR's most important regional trade partner. However, the war has created a steady stream of refugees into Cameroon. The two countries suffer from border-related issues, including raids for supplies.¹⁰² However, both countries have committed to strengthen their joint military in bordering towns and continue to rely on each other for trade and support.¹⁰³ Neighboring and regional parties have played an important role in peace efforts. They supported the country during its elections, providing protection. And they are key actors when the CAR needs support to contain rebel groups.¹⁰⁴

The CAR's relations with international partners is also mixed. The government still depends on international support from the UN and MINUSCA to maintain stability. However, the government's reliance on external military forces, mainly Russia

MINUSCA

Credit: Tatiana Mossot



and the Wagner group, have drawn criticism.¹⁰⁵ Western partners, such as France and the United States raised concerns on democratic regression. After the 2023 constitutional reform, they worry about the limits placed on politics. As a result, the CAR's relations show a balance between dependency and democratic pressure.

The political and democratic situation in the CAR is diverse. The state has regained authority and foreign support through elections and peace agreements. Yet, armed groups and weak institutions threaten long-term stability. The CAR has not fully collapsed, but its democracy is far from secure. The country's future depends on whether the government can strengthen its institutions, reduce dependence on armed actors, and build an inclusive political system.

LACK OF ACCESS TO BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

Ongoing conflict has led to major human rights violations in the CAR. Post-conflict, the country has tried recovering from these issues. Authorities have made efforts to recover after violent outbreaks. However, conflict between the government and rebel groups has led to ongoing issues. Today, the ongoing instability has caused mass displacement. Additionally, restricted access to basic human needs deepen the humanitarian crisis. This further undermines the long-term recovery and rule of law.

A leading factor of the humanitarian crisis is the lack of access to healthcare. As stated by the World Health Organization (WHO), healthcare is a fundamental human right every human being deserves.¹⁰⁶ The right to health includes safe medical services, clean water, food, and proper housing. Today, the CAR faces one of the most severe public health emergencies in the world.¹⁰⁷ Only 39.8 percent of health facilities in the country are fully operational.¹⁰⁸ This leaves the majority of the country lacking proper access to healthcare. Furthermore, as of 2023, there were only an estimated 0.6 doctors per 10,000 people.¹⁰⁹ Without access to proper healthcare,

treatable conditions can become life threatening, leading to preventable deaths.

Among those most affected are women. They suffer the greatest consequences when healthcare is limited. Reproductive health services become scarce, creating a maternal health crisis. The risk of dying from pregnancy is over 100 times higher in the CAR than in developed countries.¹¹⁰ Today, an estimated 600,000 women are of reproductive age in the CAR.¹¹¹ These women and girls are vulnerable due to the lack of access to essential health services. This includes family planning and maternal care, such as gynecologists and birth assistance. Additionally, women and young girls are exposed to gang rape and gender-based violence, increasing these risks.¹¹² While everyone in the country is affected, the lack of healthcare places women at an especially severe risk.¹¹³

Access to food is another persisting crisis. This is largely driven by conflict and poor agricultural production. Armed violence displaces populations, so farmers are unable to tend to their land and crops. Irregular rainfall, crop infestation, and climate change also lead to low and inconsistent crop yields. Between September 2025 and April 2026, almost two million people in the country faced acute food insecurity. Around 260,000 of these people are classified in IPC Phase 4.¹¹⁴ This means these people face a state of emergency, severe malnutrition, extreme food shortages, and require immediate assistance. The people most affected are farmers with low production and refugees who live in communities with limited resources. People do not have an alternative source of food, as the rising prices of imported food and produce worsens the crisis.¹¹⁵ Water is similarly difficult to come by due to a lack of investment in the water supply. Water treatment efforts fall short of demand, and water sources are not easily available to many people.¹¹⁶ The standing armed conflict also drives the issue. Women must also face the threat of sexual violence on their long journeys to collect water.¹¹⁷

Additionally, poor Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

(WASH) infrastructures hinder responses to health emergencies. Around 68 percent of the population lacks proper sanitation, and 72 percent lack handwashing facilities.¹¹⁸ Vital institutions also face this problem. About 38 percent of schools lack access to safe drinking water, and 39 percent of health centers lack WASH services.¹¹⁹ This problem creates a cycle that worsens itself over time. Limited access to WASH leads to internal displacement, and areas with many displaced people create even more demand for WASH services. Without proper security, these basic human needs will become scarcer.

Displacement has deepened the humanitarian crisis in the CAR. Internal conflict has forced many residents to flee their homes, leading to 442,320 people becoming internally displaced in 2025.¹²⁰ Regional instability has also pushed refugees from Sudan, Chad, and the DRC into the country. According to the UNHCR, the country has hosted 62,602 refugees since September 2025.¹²¹ In many areas, displaced families live in overcrowded shelters. They have little access to food, water, or medical care. As a result, displacement has become both a cause and consequence of the country's instability.¹²²

This constant movement of refugees makes it harder for the government to provide protection and services. It also places further pressure on already limited resources.

At the same time, the conflict has caused the country's own people to leave the country. Violence and the absence of basic needs have forced thousands to seek safety in neighboring states, such as Cameroon and the DRC. This weakens the country further, as the country loses workers that could contribute to society and local development. For example, a lack of transportation workers means that goods cannot move safely across the country. In rural areas, the loss of population also hurts farming output and trade.¹²³ The World Food Programme (WFP) continues to report that food insecurity and poverty remain growing causes of the crisis.¹²⁴ This shows that conflict has damaged the daily economic survival of the people.

Despite these challenges, humanitarian aid efforts have tried to reduce suffering. The UN, WFP, WHO, UNICEF and several NGOs are key examples. These bodies have worked in the country to provide food, healthcare, shelter, clean water, and protection. For example, the WFP has provided vital emergency food distributions. They

Displaced child

Credit: hdptcar



have delivered food and cash-based transfers to IDPs and refugees in the country.¹²⁵ In December 2025, the WFP launched an emergency response mission and helped around 12,000 people affected by conflict in Am Dafock. They distributed specially-designed food meant to counter the effects of malnutrition, such as High-Energy Biscuits and CSB++. Moreover, 6,125 children, women, and girls were treated for acute malnutrition by the end of 2025.¹²⁶ The WFP has provided food for schools throughout the country. As of January 2026, they have supported around 156,000 children using meals sourced from small, local farms.¹²⁷

Similarly, the WHO and Doctors Without Borders (MSF) have carried out health campaigns. The WHO has dispatched emergency drugs during deadly disease outbreaks.¹²⁸ They also publish Public Health Situation Analyses to help local and international bodies track health issues in the country.¹²⁹ Additionally, the MSF operates the *Équipe d'Urgence en République Centrafricaine* (EURECA) emergency unit. This unit monitors and deploys rapid response vehicles to provide care and supplies in isolated conflict zones.¹³⁰ As of 2026, EURECA has vaccinated around 19,700 children and carried out nutritional screenings for an estimated 15,500 children.¹³¹ Some aid programs have been successful in providing aid for displaced communities. However, these efforts are often limited by insecurity and the presence of armed groups.¹³²

The lack of basic human needs has made the humanitarian crisis in the country worse. The lives of civilians in the CAR have been greatly affected. The economic impacts of the crisis make it extremely difficult for the country to recover as a whole. Humanitarian organizations continue to provide aid, but need remains greater than the resources available. This conflict has shown that without stability, recovery becomes very difficult. For real progress to happen, it is important to propose solutions focusing on stronger institutions.

CASE STUDY: SOUTH SUDAN

Before it achieved independence, South Sudan suffered through decades of civil conflict. Many of the same rivalries continued after South Sudan became a new state in 2011. Soon after independence, disputes between political leaders and armed groups escalated into civil war in 2013.¹³³ In 2018, a peace agreement was signed to formally end the war. However, the country remains trapped in a vicious cycle of violence, mistrust, and institutional weakness.¹³⁴

Today, the situation remains fragile and unstable. The country still faces political instability and armed violence. As a result, the country suffers from several humanitarian emergencies. Elections have been delayed, and the transition process is slow moving.¹³⁵ This leaves the state without a stable democratic path. Many communities have limited access to essential needs, such as food and healthcare. However, humanitarian access is often restricted by armed violence, raids, and weak infrastructure. For example, 350 attacks on humanitarian personnel were recorded in 2025.¹³⁶ Sudan's economy has been heavily impacted by the conflict. War has destroyed major infrastructure, and displacement means that there are not enough workers to keep the economy running.¹³⁷ The government is similarly unstable. Rivalries among politicians, armed groups, and regional actors shape the issue. Even after peace agreements, armed groups still control territories throughout the country. As a result, the people have little confidence left in the government.¹³⁸

This instability has had severe effects on the people of South Sudan. Conflict, floods, and other crises have displaced people within South Sudan and across its borders.¹³⁹ In 2026, about 10 million people need humanitarian assistance. An estimated 7.8 million faced high levels of acute food insecurity between April and July 2026.¹⁴⁰ Many people live in overcrowded camps or isolated communities. Here food, water, healthcare and education are scarce. Women and children are especially vulnerable

as conflict has increased risks of gender-based violence. These conditions show that the crisis is not only political. It is also deeply social and humanitarian.¹⁴¹

Humanitarian aid efforts have tried to respond to the crisis. Involved UN bodies and aid organizations include the WFP, UNHCR, WHO, and the International Rescue Committee (IRC).¹⁴² NGOs also play an important role, such as MSF and Relief International.¹⁴³ These parties have provided food, shelter, and medical support to displaced communities. They have also worked to fight critical health issues in the country, such as cholera and malnutrition. However, conflict, funding shortages, and poor access to remote areas limit the impact of these programs.¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, these efforts are vital to help save lives and reduce suffering in the most affected regions.¹⁴⁵

Most of these major organizations also operate in the CAR. They use almost identical plans and frameworks to deploy aid in both regions. Both states receive food assistance and healthcare as primary responses.¹⁴⁶ However, South Sudan has a much higher need for humanitarian aid. An estimated 10 million people in South Sudan are in need of aid, significantly greater than the CAR.¹⁴⁷ This directly translates to funding as well. Humanitarian needs in South Sudan are estimated around USD 1.6 billion in 2025.¹⁴⁸ The Central African Republic requires roughly USD 264.1 million in 2025.¹⁴⁹ As a result, more aid flows to South Sudan.

Aid organizations must adapt their responses to displacement and changing conditions in

both countries. In the CAR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) tracks population movements to identify urgent needs and plans to use joint mobile teams where feasible to provide services such as shelter and protection.¹⁵⁰ In South Sudan, renewed fighting and flooding have displaced people and made access difficult.¹⁵¹ Humanitarian organizations also use mobile outreach teams there to reach affected communities. These examples show the importance of flexible aid delivery and coordination with local partners, rather than one fixed model for either country.¹⁵²

Despite extensive efforts, the need for aid continues. This is because the root causes have not been fully addressed. Armed violence and fighting continue throughout South Sudan. Politicians have failed to build trust, and institutions remain too weak to enforce peace everywhere. Economic dependence, ethnic tensions, and displacement have also made recovery much harder.¹⁵³ For these reasons, South Sudan is caught between peace on paper and instability in practice. The crisis may continue if government institutions and the causes of the conflict remain unaddressed.

South Sudan and the CAR share several similarities. Both countries have faced long periods of armed conflict and weak state authority. Political power, armed groups, and fragile institutions made it difficult to build lasting peace. This has led to civilians feeling the bulk of the impacts.¹⁵⁴ They also relate to each other because it proves how post-conflict states can remain unstable after peace deals. This is because disarmament, reconciliation, and state

Displacement creates a constant cycle of worsening problems, and repeated peace agreements have not solved the crisis.

building remain incomplete.

The CAR can learn from South Sudan as they begin to formulate solutions. An important lesson is how peace efforts must go beyond signing agreements. In South Sudan, many peace agreements failed because they focused too much on political elites. In doing so, they did not focus enough on local communities and long-term action.¹⁵⁵ In the CAR, this means solutions should go beyond rebel leaders and the central government. They should include civilians, local leaders, displaced groups, vulnerable communities, and other regional actors. These groups understand the conflict on the ground. Working with them is much more likely to create a lasting solution.

Similarly, some approaches should be avoided. One mistake in both countries has been relying on short-term political deals. These deals lack strong enforcement and fail to build long-term trust with each other and the people. Another failure has been treating elections as enough to create peace. Even if the government changes, armed groups still control territory, and communities still feel excluded from the process.¹⁵⁶ It also means avoiding overdependence on force alone. Military pressure only pauses violence for a short period of time. However, agreements must be made for peace to last.¹⁵⁷ For the CAR, it is important to avoid deals without security guarantees or real implementation. At the same time, some approaches have shown more promise in the long-term. Local peacebuilding and inclusion of affected communities are important. They help reduce mistrust at the public level. This is important to strengthen state institutions and

maintain lasting agreements.¹⁵⁸

Bloc Analysis

POINTS OF DIVISION

While most states recognize the importance of

addressing the crisis in the CAR, they differ in how they believe stability should be achieved. These differences primarily concern the role of foreign military intervention, the involvement of international organizations, and the development of CAR's national military. These approaches reflect different understandings of how best to restore stability while maintaining CAR's sovereignty.

One major point of division is the role of direct foreign military support. Some states view troop deployments, weapon transfers, military training, and other forms of external security assistance as necessary to effectively suppress armed groups. Others are more cautious about direct foreign involvement and instead favor military assistance facilitated through international organizations and established peacekeeping mechanisms. This distinction is particularly important given the CAR's reliance on foreign security partners and the continued presence of international peacekeeping forces.

A second division concerns the role of international organizations in maintaining peace and stability. States that favor working through international organizations typically view UN peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, diplomatic dialogue, and disarmament programs all as interconnected and necessary components of peacebuilding. Other states place greater emphasis on agreements between individual countries or direct military assistance. These differing approaches reflect a broader debate over whether stability is best achieved through internationally coordinated peacekeeping or through individual states providing more direct support to the CAR.

Finally, states differ in whether international assistance should primarily provide security for the CAR or strengthen the CAR's ability to provide its own security. Some favor immediate foreign assistance to address ongoing violence. Others emphasize training and reforming the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) to build long-term national capacity. This distinction

raises questions of sovereignty and sustainability. This is because strengthening domestic institutions may reduce dependence on foreign security actors over time, while prioritizing the CAR's own ability to handle the situation. Together, these differences form the basis for three key blocs. The first bloc prioritizes direct foreign military backing; the second favors security and peacebuilding coordinated through UN institutions; and the third prioritizes reforming and training the CAR's own armed forces.

BLOC 1: STATES THAT PRIORITIZE PROVIDING MILITARY SUPPORT TO THE CAR

The states in this group approach the crisis in the CAR through a state security lens. Their tactic to peacekeeping is through armed and military support. For them, this is the most effective way to restore the country. This bloc believes that peace attempts can also be effective through military influence. This helps restore order, protect the government, and suppress armed groups. Therefore, this bloc favors troop deployments and weapons transfers. They also look to provide military training and other forms of direct security aid. The bloc states that these actions can help when the state is too weak to secure itself on its own.

For this bloc, the conflict is a security problem that requires rapid and robust intervention. It needs to favor unilateral controlled security arrangements. This is because they believe that decisive action is needed to reduce violence. And it is also needed to re-establish territorial control. In practice, this has meant relying on outside military backing. This includes private military contractors (PMCs) such as Russia's Wagner and Africa Corps. These PMCs have played a central role in Russia's security footprint in the CAR. For example, Africa is focused on training military troops.¹⁵⁹ The logic behind this approach is that hard power can stabilize key areas. It can also protect regime security and help secure borders against spillover and instability.

This bloc would likely support and propose foreign-driven security strategies. These prioritize quick control on the ground. They would also favor direct arm supplies, military training and intelligence support. Moreover, they would support joint operations that strengthen the state's power. For example, NATO's Kosovo Force in Kosovo began in 1999 and is ongoing to this day. This mission has deployed troops to maintain security and reduce renewed fighting. It also helped preserve a safe environment after Kosovo's active conflict.¹⁶⁰ In 2026, NATO reported improvements in national stability since 2023. Troops have reduced, as instability has almost reached a complete halt.¹⁶¹

Recent reports show that Russia has remained involved in the CAR through military advisories and PMCs. The Central African Republic has also looked to expand its security partnerships and strengthen its armed units.¹⁶² This shows the policies that this bloc would follow. For example, a favored policy path could be rapid stabilization through hard power. This approach may raise concerns about dependence and sovereignty. But if done diplomatically, it will help peacekeeping.

BLOC 2: STATES THAT PRIORITIZE UN MISSIONS & INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS TO STABILIZE THE REGION

Other states prefer UN missions that lead to internal stabilization. For them, this is the main way to address conflict in the CAR. This bloc sees peacebuilding as something that should be coordinated through neutral institutions. As well as multilateral institutions such as the UN, NGOs, and other international organizations. For example, UN agencies such as WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNHCR. They have provided food aid, education support, protection services, and refugee assistance. The International NGO Safety Organization (INSO) has reported a large protection network in the country. This involves 94 humanitarian organizations such as NGOs and UN Agencies.¹⁶³ Overall, this bloc's goal is

to reduce violence. They look to weaken armed groups and create conditions for long-term political stability.¹⁶⁴

This bloc believes that lasting peace depends on combining security with humanitarian assistance. Human rights, rule of law, and political dialogue are also involved. This is why MINUSCA is central to this approach. A major part of this strategy is Demobilization, Disintegration, Reintegration, and Reconciliation (DDRR).¹⁶⁵ DDRR is meant to remove weapons from armed groups. DDRR also helps ex-combatants re-enter civilian life. In this view, peacekeeping works best when support is delivered through licit international frameworks.¹⁶⁶

The kind of solutions this bloc would favor include protecting the country's sovereignty. They also support democratic institutions. The bloc could also propose solutions that ensure military and humanitarian aid remain tied to international law. And they should also be tied to peace processes. They could also look to support disarmament programs and reintegration. Efforts to reduce the flow of irregular arms into the country are also in this bloc's agenda. For policy, they should favor security structures that are coordinated with the government and the UN. This is because they see long-term stability as dependent on diplomacy. They also look for institution building, not just territorial control.

Countries in this bloc could include the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Cameroon, the DRC, and China. These states have all supported MINUSCA. And they have also supported border UN peacekeeping in some way through political backing, peacekeepers, funding, or diplomatic support.¹⁶⁷ Together, they represent a bloc that favors multilateral peacekeeping, looks for structured disarmament, and works toward internationally supervised stabilization. For them, this is the best route toward peace in the CAR.

BLOC 3: STATES THAT PRIORITIZE REBUILDING THE CAR'S ARMED FORCES

Other states view stability in the country through the strengthening of the national army. Because of the conflict, the country's formal defense institutions like FACA and the military have become even more important. This bloc views them as the main tool for restoring order and key instruments in protecting state sovereignty. This bloc emphasizes state-building and military integrity, looking for a reform in the defense sector as the path to peace and security.

This bloc believes that peacekeeping should focus on helping the country defend itself. This can be done through structured military assistance. In practice, this means providing training, equipment, advisory support, and direct troop deployment. These actions, for example, could help strengthen the FACA's capacity to secure territory and protect the people. A recent example of this is Rwanda's continued training of FACA battalions. Between 2024-2025, Rwanda trained around 1,072 soldiers.¹⁶⁸ This shows how this approach is used to build local defense capacity and works through bilateral cooperation.¹⁶⁹ Spain also supports this strategy through the EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM-RCA). With this, Spanish personnel contributed to training and advising the FACA, following MINUSCA guidelines.¹⁷⁰

In terms of policies, this bloc would favor targeted bilateral defense agreements.¹⁷¹ They would also support formal training missions. They can support or propose solutions aimed at restructuring the FACA into a more adept force. This bloc should back policies that combine military aid with sovereignty. For these states, peace is achieved through diplomacy and institutional reform. An example to compare is the EUTM in Mali. It aimed to strengthen Mali's army, ability to defend its territory, and improve its readiness against armed groups.¹⁷² The mission trained more than 20,000 soldiers.¹⁷³ This example shows how training and capacity building can be used as a tool for stabilization in

conflict affected states.¹⁷⁴

Countries in this bloc can include Rwanda, Spain, and the CAR itself. Rwanda has deployed troops and trained FACA personnel. Spain has been one of the main contributors to EUTM-RCA. Together, these countries reflect one model of peacekeeping. Their goal is centered on strengthening the national army and helping the country become more secure.

Committee Mission

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC) is a diplomatic advisory body. Its primary function is to support peace efforts in countries with persisting conflict. They can also propose strategies for post-conflict recovery and sustainable development. The UNPBC's mandate is to support UN efforts where a country needs more than emergency response.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, they focus on long-term peace consolidation.

The CAR is in a humanitarian crisis. To be able to provide significant support there are several points that need to be met. These range from stabilizing the current government to expanding regional influence, as well as securing resources and challenging state authority. But, the main goal is to establish and maintain peace. The country's crisis is the kind of post-conflict unrest the UNPBC was made to address. The Commission's mandate is to add on to peacebuilding efforts, reconciliation, inclusive politics, security reform, and rule of law.¹⁷⁶ In the CAR this means helping ensure that international action goes beyond stopping violence. The Commission can help continue rebuilding institutions. And they move toward reducing the cycle of renewed conflict.¹⁷⁷

However, the UNPBC is limited to specific solutions. The committee cannot deploy forces or enforce agreements. They can neither replace national ownership. The UNPBC has a strict advisory-only role. They hold no authority over member states or conflict zones. In addition, they

rely on voluntary aid and donations to support long-term recovery efforts.¹⁷⁸ Its influence depends on the Security Council, UN agencies, and the country's government acting on its advice.¹⁷⁹

Nonetheless, the committee is encouraged to find solutions that are within the UNPBC's limitations. Within advisory limits, peacebuilding can accomplish a lot. Solutions should be connected to a concrete problem in the country. Displacement, weak institutions, armed groups, and violence all must be addressed. Practical proposals will help improve stability. Even if it may not end the crisis, the committee's well-rounded proposals may be the best achievable outcome.

TOPIC B

UNPBC | NHSMUN 2027

The Situation in Colombia



Introduction

For more than 60 years, Colombia has faced armed conflict between multiple parties: the Colombian government, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), paramilitary groups, and criminal organizations.¹⁸⁰ More than 450,000 people have died due to the conflict, and millions have been forced to leave their homes.¹⁸¹ Rural, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian communities have faced disproportionate harm, because many live in areas with little government protection.¹⁸² Colombia's conflict is therefore not only a military issue but also a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis.

In 2016, the Colombian government and FARC signed a major peace agreement. In this agreement, 13,000 FARC members agreed to give up their weapons. This agreement promised land reform, rural development, justice for victims, and programs to replace illegal crops. However, the government has been slow to fulfill these promises.¹⁸³ By November 2024, only 34 percent of the agreement's commitments had been completed, while 38 percent had made only limited progress. Areas included in the government's rural development programs had a poverty rate of 24.4 percent in 2024, more than twice the national rate of 11.5 percent.¹⁸⁴

The removal of the main FARC organization created a power gap in the countryside. Several FARC units rejected the agreement, while some former fighters later returned to armed activity.¹⁸⁵ Other groups, including the ELN and Gulf Clan, moved into territory that FARC had left. At least 29 new armed groups have formed since 2016. Income from drug trafficking, illegal mining, kidnapping, and other crimes helps armed groups recruit members and buy equipment.¹⁸⁶

Civilians in the countryside face the greatest effects of this violence. In Catatumbo, violence forced more than 64,000 people to flee their homes during one of Colombia's largest displacement emergencies in decades.¹⁸⁷ More than 137,000 people were prevented from leaving their communities by threats or fighting between January and August 2025. Child recruitment also increased from 342 reported cases in 2023 to

625 cases in 2024, an increase of 81 percent. During the first three months of 2025, violent events such as attacks, displacement, and recruitment rose by 45 percent compared with the same period in 2024.¹⁸⁸

The COVID-19 pandemic made these problems worse. Human Rights Watch found that armed groups enforced their own COVID-19 rules in at least 11 of Colombia's 32 departments.¹⁸⁹ These rules included curfews, travel limits, business restrictions, and bans on outsiders entering communities.

Former President Gustavo Petro created the "Total Peace" policy to negotiate with armed groups instead of depending only on military action. His government opened negotiations with 22 groups, including the ELN, five FARC factions, and several paramilitary and drug-trafficking organizations.¹⁹⁰ However, most of these negotiations later slowed or stopped because fighting continued. Some groups used ceasefires to recruit members, gain territory, and strengthen their illegal businesses.¹⁹¹

Colombia also recently completed its 2026 presidential election. The election showed that many Colombians disagree about the best way to reduce violence. Some leaders supported peace talks with armed groups, while others wanted stronger military action. Even with these disagreements, the election gave many people hope that Colombia could continue moving toward peace. The government elected in June

2026 will play an important role in deciding how Colombia responds to armed groups, drug trafficking, and poverty in rural areas.¹⁹² This shows that Colombia is at an important turning point. The choices made in the next few years will affect the country's future for decades.

Solving the crisis is difficult because Colombia must reduce violence while also addressing its causes. Military operations may weaken a group, but they do not automatically provide jobs, schools, healthcare, roads, or trusted local government. Peace talks may reduce fighting, but weak monitoring can allow armed groups to become stronger. The government must also protect former combatants, social leaders, children, and communities that are against illegal activities. Since 2016, at least 1,500 human rights defenders have been killed in Colombia.¹⁹³ Only 16.5 percent of the 1,381 cases investigated between 2016 and 2024 had resulted in convictions. Colombia needs stronger rural institutions, legal economic opportunities, civilian protection, and full implementation of the 2016 peace agreement.¹⁹⁴ These connected challenges make Colombia an urgent issue for the international community to address.

History and Description of the Issue

HISTORY OF THE FARC CONFLICT AND 2016 PEACE ACCORDS

The *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC) have gone through many changes since their founding in 1964. In 1948, the assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, the Liberal Party's leader and presidential candidate, occurred in Colombia's capital city, Bogotá. This caused an outbreak of riots and political violence between Colombia's main political parties at the time: the Liberals and the Conservatives.¹⁹⁵ The violence killed an estimated 200,000

people.¹⁹⁶ This period of time is often referred to as *la violencia*. In 1957, a compromise was made between the Liberals and Conservatives in an attempt to resolve the conflict. The two groups created a system of power with shared governance named the National Front government.¹⁹⁷ Though the National Front government ended the widespread political violence between the Liberals and Conservatives, it excluded the poor rural citizens of Colombia as they did nothing to protect them from violence by wealthy landowners who owned most land in these rural communities of Colombia.¹⁹⁸ This exclusion encouraged the establishment of early rural armed guerrillas, which are fighters who worked independently and not affiliated with an official government-run army. This set an example for the FARC to build their identity and tactics around.¹⁹⁹

The National Front government continued to isolate and punish rural Colombians, and in 1964 the FARC was founded as the armed militia of the Colombian Communist Party.²⁰⁰ Their founding was in response to the 1964 Operation Marquetalia. This operation saw the National Front attempt to take control of the main province occupied by the Colombian communists. The battle for the region was intense, and though the Communist militias were forced to flee, it was this retreat and reorganization that led them to unite under FARC.²⁰¹

FARC wanted to end the National Front system because many poor farmers believed it favored wealthy landowners and ignored rural communities. The group supported land reform, greater political participation, and stronger protections for people living in the countryside.²⁰² Throughout the Cold War and beyond, FARC clashed with not only the Colombian military, but also right-wing paramilitary groups. These right-wing paramilitary groups were often supported by the Colombian government to combat FARC's grip on the Colombian countryside.²⁰³ The Cold War made the conflict even more complicated. The United States supported the Colombian government because it feared

the spread of communism in Latin America. American aid included money, military equipment, and training.²⁰⁴ At the same time, right-wing paramilitary groups became stronger, increasing violence throughout the country. Though paramilitary groups such as the Self-Defence Force of Colombia (AUC) were initially founded as a means of combatting FARC guerillas, the violence of these groups soon expanded to other activists.²⁰⁵ Paramilitaries such as the AUC only intensified the ongoing violence in the countryside, and the violence escalated throughout the rest of the 20th century.²⁰⁶

Instability emerging from the FARC conflict also came from the group's adoption of the illicit drug trade as a means of sustaining their organization. Over time, FARC became involved in the illicit drug trade, which helped finance its operations.²⁰⁷ It was estimated that FARC earned between USD 150 million to USD 500 million annually from their exploits in the drug trade, with Colombia's defense minister in 2012 claiming that this amount was closer to USD 3.5 billion.²⁰⁸ As a result, the rise in the illicit drug trade furthered tensions and increased violence in the country, particularly the rural countryside where FARC primarily operated.²⁰⁹

In 2000, the United States approved the Plan Colombia aid package.²¹⁰ According to the plan, the United States would provide military and economic support to help the Colombian government combat drug cartels and paramilitary groups. At the time, the United States was undergoing a cocaine epidemic. By targeting the drug trade in Colombia, the United States was hoping to reduce the flow of cocaine into

the United States. However, the plan failed to be effective. The plan only focused on drug production, and not demand. Drug cartels adapted to continue to meet the demand for cocaine. Farmers adopted different techniques to avoid detection and destruction of coca, the plant that makes cocaine. Drug traffickers shifted supply routes to accommodate the increased surveillance. The increased militarized crackdown on drugs also intensified the violence occurring in the country.²¹¹

Peace discussions between the Colombian government and FARC leadership began in 2012, and finally concluded in 2016 with joint peace accords signed between the two. The accords saw FARC demobilize in exchange for political recognition and increased engagement in the Colombian political system.²¹² Despite the accords' initial success, continuous rearmament and remobilization in the rural countryside by FARC and other guerilla groups threatens the peace established by the 2016 accords.²¹³

COLOMBIAN POLITICAL INSTABILITY SINCE 2016

Since the signing of the 2016 accords between the government and FARC, corruption and political instability has plagued Colombia. As of 2022, Colombian citizens recorded some of the lowest trust in government in the world. Only 22 percent of Colombians reported believing government officials would be held accountable of crimes they committed while in office. Further, 88 percent of Colombians believed that most, if not all, of Congress is corrupt, and only 27

The drug trade became one of the focuses of the Colombian government's fight against FARC.

percent believed that officials are elected fairly.²¹⁴ Today, bribery and payoffs are growing as many government officials take bribes from gangs, drug smugglers, and other non-state actors to ensure their illicit businesses are maintained.²¹⁵

Several corruption scandals have also weakened public trust. One example was the Reficar oil refinery project, which was meant to cost USD 3.3 billion. The project instead cost USD 8.016 billion, all funded by the money of Colombia's taxpayers.²¹⁶ Another was the National Unit for Disaster Risk Management (UNGRD) scandal, in which the program's officials were accused of embezzling. This means they took public funds for their own use.²¹⁷ Events like these have caused many Colombians to lose confidence in their government.

One cause of this distrust is the slow implementation of the 2016 Peace Accords, which is set to be completed by 2031.²¹⁸ However, by the end of the agreement's seventh year, only 32 percent of its requirements had been completed. Another 19 percent had reached an intermediate level of implementation.²¹⁹ Meanwhile, 39 percent had received only minimal implementation, and 10 percent had not begun.²²⁰ Land reform, economic development,

and public services have improved in some regions, but many communities are still waiting for the changes they were promised. Armed groups have taken advantage of these delays and expanded their influence in several rural areas. Rural reform, which was intended to improve land access, public services, and economic opportunities, remains one of the least-implemented parts of the agreement.²²¹ This slow progress has prevented many rural communities from receiving the full benefits promised by the peace agreement.²²² When FARC left many rural areas, the government was unable to establish control quickly. As a result, other armed groups moved into these territories and competed for land, resources, and trafficking routes.²²³ These activities include drug trafficking, illegal mining, and the control of important transportation routes. Despite promises to resolve violence, fighting still continues to occur. During 2024, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) verified that 252 people were killed in 72 massacres.²²⁴ OHCHR also confirmed the killings of 89 human rights defenders during the same year.²²⁵

Political violence has also made democratic participation more difficult in parts of Colombia.



Colombians take part in national protests

Credit: Oxi.Ap

The October 2019 local and departmental elections were the first of their kind after the 2016 Peace Accords. Former FARC members were able to participate through the new FARC political party. For the election, the Organization of American States reported on the occurrences of electoral violence. This ranged from some instances of violence at polling stations to violence against political candidates themselves. While the Colombian government did make attempts to reduce violence by granting candidates protective measures, seven candidates were murdered while 16 were victims of attempted murder.²²⁶

Moreover, former FARC members who followed the Peace Accords have also faced serious security threats. By January 2025, the UN reported that 441 former combatants had been killed since the agreement was signed.²²⁷ These killings have weakened trust in the government's ability to protect former combatants after they surrender their weapons. Continued violence may also discourage members of other armed groups from participating in future peace agreements.

Dissatisfaction with Colombia's government has also led to repeated large-scale protests. In 2021, President Ivan Duque proposed a tax reform plan in hopes of improving the country's financial situation. The reform increased the number of people paying taxes, and increased the amount of taxes being paid. Additionally, this occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic when poverty was already on the rise in the country.²²⁸ President Duque later withdrew the proposal, but demonstrations continued as protestors raised broader concerns about the government.²²⁹

The Human Rights Watch confirmed 34 deaths that occurred during the protests.²³⁰ The scale of the demonstrations shows that the political dissatisfaction had grown beyond individual policies into a broader challenge of public trust in Colombia's government.

Colombia's crop-substitution program has also faced serious financial problems. The Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) reported that 99,097 families enrolled in the program and that about 94 percent followed its requirements.²³¹ However, around 40,000 enrolled families had not received the promised financial compensation. Other reports found that 73,332 families had received at least one Immediate Food Assistance payment, showing that government support was distributed inconsistently.²³²

By 2020, more than 1.6 million Venezuelans had entered Colombia because of Venezuela's political, economic, and humanitarian crisis.²³³ Around 500,000 Colombians who had last lived in Venezuela also returned to Colombia.²³⁴ These population shifts raised pressure on housing, employment, healthcare, education, and other public services in areas where government resources were already limited.

Colombia has recently made some measurable progress on rural land reform. In January 2026, close to 300,000 hectares of land had reportedly been delivered to rural farmers during the last several years.²³⁵ However, the larger rural-reform process continues to be difficult. This difference between completed land transfers and the larger needs of rural Colombia shows why land

Migration from Venezuela placed more pressure on Colombia after the Peace Accords.

reform remains an important metric of the Peace Accords' success.

RISE OF ARMED GROUPS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Armed activity has been concentrated in rural regions with valuable resources or useful transportation routes.²³⁶ In Colombia, there are 13 administrative divisions, called departments where insurgent groups are especially active: Antioquia, Bolívar, Cauca, César, Chocó, Córdoba, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Sucre, Valle del Cauca, and Vichada. These departments contain coca-growing regions, mining areas, border crossings, and routes leading toward the Pacific Ocean or neighboring countries.²³⁷ Control over these locations allows armed groups to collect money from drug trafficking, illegal mining, smuggling, and other illegal businesses.²³⁸ These illegal incomes can then be used to recruit members, purchase equipment, and expand into additional territory.

Particularly, Norte de Santander and Nariño have become important centers of the renewed conflict. Groups like ELN, FARC, the Popular

Liberation Army, Los Rastrojos, and the Gulf Clan have all operated in Norte de Santander.²³⁹ ACLED identified approximately 18 armed groups operating in Nariño.²⁴⁰ The Gulf Clan has also maintained a major presence in Antioquia, Bolívar, César, Chocó, Córdoba, and Sucre. FARC dissident organizations, or factions of FARC that rejected the 2016 peace deal with the Colombian government, have reentered parts of Cauca, Meta, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca. The presence of several groups in the same region increases the risk of conflict because each group wants control over the same communities, resources, and transportation routes.²⁴¹

In 2022, Former President Gustavo Petro's government introduced a policy known as "Total Peace" that expanded peace negotiations by including the ELN, FARC dissident groups, and other armed organizations.²⁴² The policy also connected these new negotiations to the continued implementation of the 2016 Peace Accords. During the first 27 months of Petro's presidency, violent events between Colombian security forces and armed groups decreased by 28 percent in comparison with the previous months. Much of the decline can be linked to negotiated ceasefires and reduced military



A river patrol operates in a rural area of Colombia

Credit: Spc. Juancarlos Paz

pressure.²⁴³

However, the lack of pressure from government forces gave some armed groups more opportunities to expand their territory. The number of municipalities affected by armed groups has been steadily increasing. In 2023, a total of 446 municipalities were affected, which is a 30 percent increase in comparison to 2019, before the pandemic. Within Petro's administration, this number increased, with around 580 municipalities recording activities involving armed groups.²⁴⁴

Moreover, the size of Colombia's armed groups has increased significantly in recent years.²⁴⁵ A Colombian security report estimated that armed groups contained 15,120 combatants and support members when Former President Petro entered office in mid-2022. By June 2025, this estimate had reached 21,958 members, representing an increase of approximately 45 percent.²⁴⁶ This growth was larger than the 17 percent increase recorded during the four-year administration of former President Iván Duque. Armed groups added approximately 1,469 members between June 2024 and June 2025 alone, an increase of seven percent in one year. Colombia's defense minister confirmed that the government's estimate was approximately 22,000 members in July 2025.²⁴⁷

In 2025, conflict between illegal groups increased by 34 percent.²⁴⁸ By the end of 2025, at least 13 regions were experiencing active conflict between armed organizations. This was the highest number of affected regions recorded since the 2016 Peace Agreement.²⁴⁹ Armed

groups have also begun using drones, increasing their ability to threaten rival organizations, government forces, and infrastructure. These developments show that the groups are becoming larger and are also gaining new technology as well as wider territorial reach.

Civilians living in the countryside have experienced many of the consequences of this expansion.²⁵⁰ Forced displacement increased by approximately 85 percent during 2025.²⁵¹ Much of this increase was connected to the crisis in Catatumbo, where approximately 92,000 people were forced to leave their homes. An ELN campaign against rival groups in the Colombia–Venezuela border region also displaced more than 56,000 people during one major stage of the Catatumbo crisis.²⁵² These figures may cover different periods of the crisis, but both show that tens of thousands of civilians were affected. Displacement interrupts education, employment, farming, healthcare, and access to housing.

Community leaders are also placed at risk because they often oppose illegal mining, drug trafficking, forced recruitment, and the seizure of community land. In 2024, an average of approximately 16 community leaders were killed each month. The yearly total reached 186 documented killings, compared with 163 during 2023.²⁵³ Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and rural farming communities face especially high risks because many live in resource-rich areas where the government has a limited presence.²⁵⁴ Armed groups may attempt to intimidate these communities or force residents to leave land that is valuable for mining, coca cultivation, or transportation routes.

The expansion of armed groups has been connected to an increase in fighting between rival organizations.

The recruitment of children has become another major humanitarian concern. There were 625 reported cases of child recruitment by armed groups during 2024. This represented an 81 percent increase compared with the number of cases reported in 2023.²⁵⁵ The real number may be higher because many incidents in remote regions are never officially documented. Armed groups may target young people in communities with limited schools, employment, security, and government services. The growing recruitment of children allows armed organizations to replace lost members and maintain control over rural territory.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON RURAL GOVERNANCE AND ARMED-GROUP CONTROL

The COVID-19 pandemic created a new security crisis in Colombia while the country was still attempting to implement the 2016 Peace Agreement.²⁵⁶ The pandemic was especially serious in border and rural regions that already faced armed violence, increased migration, poverty, and limited government services.²⁵⁷ Colombia's closure of its border with Venezuela disrupted legal migration and trade while

increasing uncertainty for people who depended on crossing the border for employment, food, and healthcare. Armed groups used this uncertainty to expand their authority in areas where the Colombian government had a weak presence.²⁵⁸

Colombia introduced a national lockdown in late March 2020 to slow the spread of COVID-19. By July 13, 2020 the country had recorded more than 150,000 confirmed cases and over 5,000 deaths connected to the virus.²⁵⁹ By February 2021, the totals had increased to more than two million confirmed cases and 57,000 deaths.²⁶⁰ The Colombian economy also decreased by 6.8 percent during 2020, which was its largest economic decline in modern history. Construction also declined by 27.7 percent, mining declined by 15.7 percent, and retail activity declined by 15.1 percent.²⁶¹ These economic losses increased unemployment and made it more difficult for the government to support poor and isolated communities.

Although some urban crimes temporarily declined, armed groups increased their control in several rural regions.²⁶² Human Rights Watch found that armed organizations imposed their own COVID-19 rules in at least 11 of Colombia's 32 departments. These departments included



Health worker administering a COVID-19 vaccine

Credit: USAID

Arauca, Bolívar, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Guaviare, Huila, Nariño, Norte de Santander, and Putumayo.²⁶³ Armed groups used violence to enforce their rules in at least five departments and threatened violence in at least four others. Human Rights Watch reached these findings after interviewing 55 people across 13 departments between March and June 2020.²⁶⁴

The rules created by armed groups included curfews, travel restrictions, limits on business hours, and bans on outsiders entering certain communities. Some groups also restricted the movement of cars and boats or limited the number of family members who could leave their homes.²⁶⁵ The ELN, FARC dissident groups, and the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia were among the organizations that imposed these measures.²⁶⁶ Armed groups generally claimed that these rules were intended to prevent COVID-19 from spreading in the territories under their control. However, enforcing health rules also allowed the groups to present themselves as local authorities and demonstrate the government's limited power.²⁶⁷

A 2021 survey found that 65 percent of respondents had changed their behavior because of the pandemic. Only 26 percent reported hearing government messages about limiting physical contact or maintaining social distance.²⁶⁸ Most respondents, or 68 percent, said they had not heard COVID-19 messages from armed groups. However, people in rural communities were more likely to experience restrictions directly imposed by those groups.²⁶⁹ In San José del Guaviare, 23 percent of respondents reported movement restrictions imposed by armed groups. The same figure was 18 percent in San Vicente del Caguán and 12 percent in La Uribe, compared with averages of nine percent in other rural municipalities and 10 percent in urban municipalities.²⁷⁰

These findings show that armed groups were more successful at enforcing rules than explaining public-health information. Only five percent of surveyed residents in La Uribe

described protection from COVID-19 as a service provided by an armed group.²⁷¹ This suggests that many residents followed the rules because the groups controlled their communities, not necessarily because residents trusted their health information. The pandemic therefore gave armed organizations a new method of demonstrating territorial control without openly fighting government forces.²⁷²

Around four million Colombians had lost their jobs by October 2020. Unemployment reached approximately 17 percent nationally, 22 percent among young people, and 28 percent among women.²⁷³ Families that lost legal employment became more vulnerable to recruitment or economic pressure from groups involved in coca cultivation, mining, and other illegal industries.²⁷⁴

The pandemic also increased the risks faced by social leaders and community representatives.²⁷⁵ At the beginning of 2020, killings of social leaders were approximately twice as high as during the first months of 2019.²⁷⁶ Reported killings briefly decreased when the strictest quarantine measures began but increased again as the security situation in rural regions deteriorated. In Cauca, 20 social activists were killed after lockdown measures were introduced, representing 59 percent of the national total during that period.²⁷⁷ Nine people killed during 2020 had participated in Colombia's land-restitution process. Quarantine rules made some leaders more vulnerable because their locations and daily routines became easier for armed groups to predict.²⁷⁸

Current Status

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT CRISIS

Colombia is facing a new rise in forced movement. More than seven million people are living as internally displaced persons in the country.²⁷⁹ An internally displaced person has fled home but has not crossed a national

border.²⁸⁰ This is different from a refugee who has entered another country. Colombia also hosts about three million refugees and migrants from Venezuela.²⁸¹ These two crises place pressure on housing, schools, health care, and local jobs.²⁸²

The current rise is tied to the fight for rural land. Armed groups want to control coca fields, mines, rivers, roads, and border paths. They may threaten a town so they can take control without a long battle.²⁸³ In the first half of 2025, fights over land caused 69 percent of the large group displacement events tracked by aid workers. This means that most large movements were not random. Instead, they grew from planned efforts to control key areas.²⁸⁴

The crisis does not affect all groups in the same way. Children made up 34 percent of Colombia's displaced population in 2025. When a family flees, children may lose school, food, medicine, and safe housing. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian towns also face high risk because many are in remote areas where armed groups are active. In 2023, 10,640 Indigenous people in Chocó were trapped in their home areas by armed groups. This was 53 percent of all people facing confinement in that department.²⁸⁵

Confinement is a second part of the crisis. A family may stay in its home but still be unable to reach food, work, school, or a clinic. Armed groups can block roads, rivers, and paths that link small towns to larger cities.²⁸⁶ This is very dangerous for groups that depend on fishing, hunting, or farming.²⁸⁷ It is also hard for aid groups to reach people in these places. As a result, some families receive help only after their needs have become severe.²⁸⁸

Many displaced people move to cities instead of returning home. Cities may seem safer because they have more police, hospitals, and jobs. Yet, city life can bring new problems. Families may settle in poor areas with weak housing and few public services. Some cannot prove that they own the land or home they left behind. Others cannot find steady work because their farming skills do not match city jobs. This can turn a short emergency into years of poverty.²⁸⁹

Return is not always safe or possible. An armed group may still control the land that a family left. A home may also be damaged, occupied, or cut off from basic services. For this reason, aid groups use the term “durable solution.” A durable solution may mean a safe return, a new home in another place, or full settlement



Refugee camp on the Colombian side of the Colombia-Venezuela border

Credit: Mussi Katz

in the city where a person now lives. The goal is to help people live safely without needing emergency aid. In February 2026, senior UN leaders visited Colombia to support this work. The visit focused on stronger work between the national government, local leaders, UN offices, and displaced people.²⁹⁰ UNHCR also asked for USD 64.1 million for its 2025 work in Colombia and nearby states. Its work includes legal help, emergency supplies, shelter, and support for towns receiving displaced families. EU aid also helps UNHCR reach remote parts of Colombia.²⁹¹

Overall, the main problem is no longer only how to help people flee danger. Colombia must also help families rebuild a stable life. This requires safe land, legal papers, schools, jobs, health care, and protection from armed groups. It also requires displaced people to help plan the programs that affect them. Without these steps, people may remain displaced even after the first emergency ends. Displacement should be treated as both a safety crisis and a long-term peace issue.

DRUG CRISIS

Colombia's drug crisis has two related parts.

The first is the large illegal trade in coca and cocaine.²⁹² The second is the rise in harmful drug use and overdoses inside Colombia. These problems are linked, but they need different answers.²⁹³ A plan based only on arrests may not reduce poverty, drug use, or armed control.²⁹⁴

Colombia remains one of the world's top two coca-growing countries. Coca can give poor farmers more money than many legal crops. It is also easier to sell in areas with bad roads and few legal buyers.²⁹⁵ Armed groups may give loans, buy the harvest, or punish farmers who refuse to work with them.²⁹⁶ This makes coca part of the local economy in some rural areas.

The 2016 Peace Agreement promised farmers help to replace coca with legal crops. This approach is called alternative development. It may include roads, land rights, loans, training, and help finding buyers. The goal is to make legal farming pay enough for a family to live.²⁹⁷ Progress has been slow in areas where the state has little reach or where armed groups threaten farmers.

Drug routes have also changed. The border area shared by Peru, Colombia, and Brazil has become more important to traffickers.²⁹⁸ Rivers connect

*Colombian Manual Eradicators
Destroying Coca Fields*

*Credit: U.S. Government
Accountability Office*



coca-growing land to towns and trade routes in the Amazon. Criminal groups can move drugs across borders where the state has few officers. They may also work with local armed groups instead of controlling every part of the route themselves. This makes the trade harder for one country to stop alone.²⁹⁹

The drug trade also shapes Colombia's ties with the United States. The United States reviews whether Colombia is meeting shared drug-control goals. In 2025, United States leaders warned that Colombia could lose approval because coca growing and cocaine output remained high. Such a step could reduce aid and weaken work between the two governments. Colombia's government argued that past plans focused too much on coca fields and not enough on major traffickers, money, and public health. This debate remains important because both states depend on each other for drug and security work.³⁰⁰

Drug use inside Colombia is also a growing health problem. A national study counted 127,087 substance related overdoses among people aged ten and older from 2010 to 2021. About 75 percent involved people between ages 10 and 34. The reported overdose rate rose by 356 percent during the study period. The fastest recent rise involved young women and several types of medicine and illegal drugs.³⁰¹

This evidence has pushed Colombia toward a health-based response. Colombia began a take-home naloxone program in 2022. Naloxone is an emergency medicine used when someone has taken too much of an opioid. Colombia also opened a supervised care site called Cambie in

Bogotá. The site links people to health workers and recovery support. This model treats drug use as a health issue as well as a crime issue.³⁰²

The current challenge is to connect these two sides of the crisis. Border states need to share facts and track groups that work across countries.³⁰³ Police and courts need to focus on leaders, money, and violence instead of only poor growers and users. Health systems also need better records, care, and early help for people at risk. There must be a decision on how these parts can work together without harming rural towns or pushing the trade into a new region.³⁰⁴

JUNE 2026 ELECTION

Colombia's 2026 election took place during a tense period. Armed groups were growing in some rural areas, and many voters were worried about crime, jobs, and the peace process. The election also followed four years under Former President Petro, the country's first left-wing president.³⁰⁵ Colombian presidents cannot serve a second term in a row, so Petro was not a candidate.³⁰⁶ Voters were choosing whether to keep parts of his plan or move in a new direction.³⁰⁷

Violence affected the campaign before voting began. NPR reported a wave of attacks and threats linked to the election period. The danger was greatest in places where armed groups already controlled roads, farms, or local trade.³⁰⁸ In those areas, a threat can keep a candidate from visiting or stop a voter from speaking freely. Armed groups may also pressure local leaders or support the person who best protects their

Rural farmers need safe legal work so they are not forced back into coca.

business.³⁰⁹

This pattern was not new in 2026. InSight Crime found similar risks before the 2022 election. Criminal groups tried to shape local politics in places where the state was weak. They did not always support one national party. Their main goal was often to protect drug routes, mining, local contracts, or freedom from arrest. The same local pressure remained a concern in 2026.³¹⁰

The main candidates offered very different plans. Iván Cepeda ran with the left-wing Historic Pact and supported many parts of Petro's peace policy.³¹¹ Abelardo de la Espriella ran as a hard-right outsider and promised a stronger use of police, prisons, and the armed forces.³¹² Their split gave voters two very different answers to armed violence. Cepeda favored talks and social reform, while de la Espriella stressed force and fast punishment.³¹³ The first round was held on May 31, 2026. Preliminary results gave de la Espriella 43.7 percent of the vote and Cepeda 40.9 percent. Paloma Valencia finished third with 6.9 percent. Since no candidate won more than half, de la Espriella and Cepeda moved to a runoff on June 21.³¹⁴ The weak result for the political center showed how divided the country

had become.

The runoff debate went beyond left and right. Voters were also judging the 2016 Peace Agreement and Petro's "Total Peace" talks.³¹⁵ Supporters of talks argued that force alone had failed to end the conflict. Critics said armed groups used ceasefires and talks to grow stronger.³¹⁶ The next government would therefore shape talks with the ELN, FARC dissidents, and other groups. It would also decide how strongly to carry out rural and justice parts of the 2016 deal.³¹⁷ The United States was another key issue. United States leaders had criticized Colombia's drug policy and had threatened stronger action over coca and cocaine. De la Espriella was seen as closer to the United States government's security plan. Cepeda was more likely to defend Petro's focus on talks, rural change, and public health. The vote could therefore change aid, drug work, trade, and ties with Washington.³¹⁸ The runoff took place on June 21, 2026, and Abelardo de la Espriella won the presidency by roughly one percentage point, under 250,000 votes out of more than 26 million cast. Petro and Cepeda initially disputed the count without providing evidence, and Cepeda conceded on June 24. De la Espriella's win points toward the harder

President de la Espriella

Credit: Abelardo de la Espriella



security posture described above rather than a continuation of Petro's approach.³¹⁹

Colombia's peace talks with armed groups were also part of the debate surrounding the election. Other countries had supported these negotiations. For example, Qatar hosted talks in Doha between the Colombian government and the self-described Gaitanist Army of Colombia (EGC) in September 2025. The future of such negotiations was one of the choices facing the government elected in June 2026.³²⁰

Trust in the result was also a concern. After the first round, Petro and Cepeda questioned some vote totals without giving proof. Colombia's election offices still completed the first count quickly. Analysts warned that false fraud claims could raise anger if the runoff was close.³²¹ A fair count, clear public facts, and safety for voters were therefore central to the election.³²²

The key question is what the election means for peace after the vote. The new president must work with Congress, courts, local leaders, and the security forces.³²³ The government must also protect voters and leaders in places where armed groups have power.³²⁴ Sharp political division can make this work harder.³²⁵ The election matters because its result will shape how Colombia handles armed groups, drug policy, rural reform, and the 2016 peace deal.³²⁶

Bloc Analysis

POINTS OF DIVISION

As the UNPBC promotes peacebuilding, almost all countries would agree that promoting safety and security throughout Colombia is vital. However, countries disagree over how these peacebuilding measures should be implemented. Some countries may argue that security measures must take priority over all other measures, including humanitarian or economic aid. These countries would likely target

Colombia's narcotics trade as a way to increase security in the region and to prevent the effects of Colombia's drug trafficking market spreading to other countries. In contrast, some countries prioritize promoting international cooperation and establishing effective peace agreements. These countries would likely collaborate with intergovernmental organizations, focusing beyond the issue of security.

Some countries might also prioritize taking a hands-on approach to promoting peacebuilding. Instead of targeting security measures or working with the international community, these countries would facilitate direct negotiations between criminal groups in Colombia and the government. Additionally, other countries that are directly affected by the conflicts in Colombia might value regional cooperation when it comes to implementing security and peacebuilding measures. These countries would include those bordering Colombia, such as Venezuela, Panama, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru, and those affected by Colombia's drug trade.

Thus, while most countries would agree to implement peacebuilding efforts to improve the situation in Colombia, the ways in which they would do so differ. Much of the reasons for this stem from countries' geographical locations and existing relationship with Colombia. While some value security, others prioritize regional and international cooperation to ensure peace in the region.

BLOC 1: STATES FAVORING COUNTER-NARCOTICS AND SECURITY MEASURES DIVISION

This bloc believes that security should come before everything else. Countries in this group argue that armed organizations cannot be allowed to grow stronger while peace negotiations are taking place. They believe that governments must first establish control over territory, strengthen national institutions, and reduce the power of criminal groups. Members of this bloc would likely support stronger border

security, intelligence sharing, police cooperation, and action against the financial networks that support armed groups.³²⁷

Argentina has taken a position toward organized crime. In 2025, the Argentine government placed the Cartel de los Soles on its terrorism list. This allowed Argentina to use financial restrictions against the organization and showed its support for stronger regional action against drug trafficking and organized crime.³²⁸ El Salvador follows a similar security-first approach. President Nayib Bukele's government has used large-scale arrests and strict criminal laws to weaken gangs. Gang violence has fallen greatly, but human rights groups have raised serious concerns about arbitrary detention and the loss of due process.³²⁹ These different results could create an important debate inside the bloc about how far governments should go in the name of security.

Countries like Israel can also fit into this bloc because of its long history of security cooperation with Colombia. Colombia has used Israeli-made military equipment in operations against guerrilla groups and drug-trafficking organizations. However, Colombia broke diplomatic relations with Israel in 2024. This means Israel's role in the bloc should be understood more as a security-policy position than as a close current partnership with Colombia.³³⁰

The main argument of this bloc is that peace agreements will remain weak if the government cannot enforce laws or control territory. These states may support stronger security institutions, action against the finances of armed groups, better information sharing, and stronger protection for communities threatened by organized crime. However, the committee must also consider the risks of this approach. A security policy that ignores human rights or rural poverty may create new problems. This bloc must therefore decide how to make the state stronger without harming the communities it is meant to protect.

BLOC 2: STATES SUPPORTING MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AND THE PEACE AGREEMENT

This bloc places more trust in international institutions and the full implementation of Colombia's 2016 Peace Agreement. These states are more likely to work through the UN, the European Union, the Organization of American States, and international aid programs. Their approach does not reject security operations. However, they argue that military action alone cannot solve the causes of Colombia's conflict.

The 2016 Peace Agreement is especially important to this bloc. In January 2026, the UN Secretary-General warned that the agreement must be carried out as a whole if Colombia is to reach peace, justice, and reconciliation.³³¹ This means continuing work on rural reform, justice for victims, the return of former fighters to civilian life, and stronger government institutions. For this bloc, failing to complete these promises could allow distrust and violence to continue.

Humanitarian aid is another major concern. The EU reported that millions of people in Colombia continued to need humanitarian support in 2026. The EU has funded programs for displaced people and communities affected by armed groups for many years.³³² The EU has also supported closer cooperation with Colombia on peace, democracy, organized crime, climate issues, and institutional stability. In 2025, Colombia and the EU agreed to begin negotiations on a wider partnership agreement. Both sides also repeated their support for multilateral cooperation and the UN system.³³³

Several states in this bloc also fund international monitoring inside Colombia. Germany, Canada, Spain, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Sweden have supported the OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia. The mission works directly with communities and tracks violence, peace programs, and the government's presence in rural areas.³³⁴

This bloc would therefore focus on institutional continuity. A change in government should not mean that peace programs disappear. Its members may support human rights monitoring, rural development, humanitarian aid, stronger courts, victim programs, and international review of peace commitments. Their main challenge is speed. Long-term development can take years, while communities may need protection immediately. The bloc must therefore connect humanitarian aid and institution-building with enough short-term security to protect civilians while peace programs develop.

BLOC 3: STATES SUPPORTING DIRECT NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION

This bloc believes that direct talks with armed groups should remain an important part of Colombia's peace process. These states may serve as mediators, guarantors, hosts, or outside supporters during negotiations. Their approach is different from Bloc Two. Bloc Two focuses more on institutions and carrying out existing agreements while Bloc Three focuses on getting opposing groups into the same room and helping them reach new agreements.

Colombia already has a long history of using outside countries in peace negotiations. Brazil, Cuba, Chile, Mexico, Norway, and Venezuela served as guarantor countries during talks between the Colombian government and the ELN. Venezuela also hosted rounds of negotiations in Caracas.³³⁵ These countries supported the negotiations, while Venezuela hosted this particular meeting in Caracas.

Qatar has become another important example. In 2025, Doha hosted negotiations between the Colombian government and the self-described Ejército Gaitanista de Colombia (EGC). Qatar, Norway, Spain, and Switzerland formed the group of mediator countries. In December 2025, the Colombian government and the EGC signed peace commitments that created a path toward gradual demobilization and peacebuilding in

areas affected by the group.³³⁶ The mediating states said that future progress would depend on trust, transparency, and the implementation of the promises already made.³³⁷

These talks did not immediately solve the conflict. In June 2026, Colombia's peace office said that some parts of the planned demobilization process still could not begin because the necessary conditions had not been completed. However, Qatar, Norway, Spain, and Switzerland remained involved as mediators.³³⁸ This shows both the strength and weakness of direct negotiation. Talks can create agreements that military action may not achieve, but an agreement has little value if the parties do not carry it out.

This bloc would likely support ceasefires, direct talks, international mediation, and plans for fighters to leave armed groups and return to civilian life. It may also place strong importance on Colombian sovereignty. Outside states can support negotiations, but Colombia must remain in control of its own peace process. The main challenge is making sure negotiations produce real changes instead of giving armed groups time to gain more power. Strong monitoring and clear goals would therefore be important parts of this bloc's approach.

BLOC 4: STATES FAVORING REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION AND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

This bloc focuses on cooperation between governments without giving another country broad control over its security policy. These states face many of the same problems as Colombia, including organized crime, illegal mining, drug trafficking, migration, and armed groups that can move across borders. They may therefore support joint police work, information sharing, stronger border institutions, and regional agreements. However, many would still want each state to control operations inside its own territory.

Ecuador is a strong example. Colombia and Ecuador share a long border where illegal armed groups and trafficking networks operate. In August 2025, the two governments agreed that stronger joint work was needed against organized crime, terrorism, illegal mining, and drug trafficking, especially near the border.³³⁹ This approach is different from simply sending more military forces. It focuses on making national governments work together against problems that cross borders.

Other South American countries have taken similar steps. In 2026, authorities from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru worked together in a regional operation against environmental crimes in the Amazon. These crimes included illegal mining, logging, and other illegal businesses that often use the same routes and networks as larger criminal organizations.³⁴⁰ The example shows why Colombia cannot solve every security problem by itself. A group may be based in one country, move goods through another, and hide money somewhere else.

Colombia has also continued police cooperation with other states in the Americas. In December 2025, Bogotá hosted an Ameripol meeting involving police organizations from countries across the region. Colombia stated that international cooperation remained necessary against problems such as drug trafficking.³⁴¹ Regional organizations can also support this work without replacing national governments. The OAS Mission in Colombia, for example, works with state institutions and communities while respecting Colombia's control over its own peace process.³⁴²

This bloc would therefore favor practical cooperation between states. Possible priorities include better communication between police agencies, stronger border institutions, shared information about criminal networks, protection for people displaced across borders, and cooperation against illegal financial activity. At the same time, members may resist plans that allow foreign forces to operate freely inside

another state's territory. The main goal is to stop Colombia's instability from becoming a wider regional crisis while still protecting national sovereignty.

Committee Mission

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (UNPBC) helps countries build peace after a war.³⁴³ It does not have soldiers or police. It also cannot force a country to follow its advice. Instead, it brings governments, local groups, UN offices, and donors together.³⁴⁴ These groups discuss what a country needs to stop violence from returning. They can also help raise money for peace programs.

In Colombia, the UNPBC supports the 2016 Peace Agreement between the government and FARC. The agreement ended the main conflict between the two sides. However, violence still affects many rural areas. Some towns do not have enough police, schools, roads, courts, or jobs. Armed groups can use these gaps to gain power. The UNPBC wants Colombia to bring more safety and public services to these places.³⁴⁵

The UNPBC is now focused on several parts of the peace agreement. It supports land reform, justice for victims, and help for former FARC fighters who returned to civilian life.³⁴⁶ It also wants women, young people, Indigenous groups, and Afro-Colombian groups to have a voice in the peace process. On 23 April 2025, the UNPBC held a meeting about Colombia. Members asked for faster work on the peace agreement and better safety for people in rural areas.³⁴⁷

The UNPBC also visited Colombia in August 2025. Members traveled to Bogotá, Tierra Grata, and Medellín. They met with government leaders, local groups, former fighters, and business owners. These meetings helped the UNPBC learn what people needed in their own towns.³⁴⁸

The UNPBC works closely with the UN

Peacebuilding Fund.³⁴⁹ The UNPBC gives advice, while the fund pays for peace projects. By April 2025, the fund had spent more than USD 60 million on projects in Colombia. The money has helped local groups, victims, former fighters, and towns once controlled by armed groups. The fund is also helping seven private business projects create legal jobs in areas hurt by conflict.³⁵⁰

The committee will decide how the UNPBC can add to the progress already made in Colombia while considering the challenges that remain. Violence, poverty, weak public institutions, and unequal access to resources continue to affect many communities throughout the country.³⁵¹ Greater attention must also be given to protecting Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and rural communities and creating more opportunities for former fighters returning to civilian life.³⁵² Through stronger cooperation among governments, local communities, international organizations, and private organizations, the committee can help support a more stable and lasting peace in Colombia. The success of these efforts will help determine whether Colombia can achieve their goal or whether violence will continue to affect future generations.

Research and Preparation Questions

Your dais has prepared the following research and preparation questions as a means of providing guidance for your research process. These questions should be carefully considered, as they embody some of the main critical thought and learning objectives surrounding your topic.

TOPIC A

- 1 To what extent has religion driven violence in the Central African Republic since 2012, and how has it been used by political powers and armed groups to mobilize support, justify violence, and pursue power and resources?
- 2 How have the previous coup d'états in the Central African Republic shaped and affected the political state of the country to this day?
- 3 How does the absence of state institutions in rural areas of the Central African Republic undermine the efforts of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR)?
- 4 What strategies could be implemented by the state to form credible, strong, and long-lasting peace agreements to reduce violence?
- 5 How has the Central African Republic's relationship with Russia's Africa Corps affected state sovereignty, civilian protection, resource governance, and overall long-term stability? Has the impact been positive, negative, or both?
- 6 Why has humanitarian assistance in the Central African Republic been unable to resolve persistent needs despite constant intervention by the UN, NGOs, and international donors?

TOPIC B

- 1 How has Colombia's conflict affected the people living in your assigned country?
- 2 Does your country support peace talks, military action, or a mix of both?
- 3 How should Colombia and nearby countries work together against armed groups and drug trafficking?
- 4 What can be done to help displaced families return home or build safe lives elsewhere?
- 5 How can farmers replace coca crops without losing their source of money?
- 6 What role should foreign aid and investment play in Colombia's peace process?
- 7 What actions should the United Nations take to support peace, security, and fair government in Colombia?

Important Documents

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About the Authors

TOPIC A: CALLIA TORIZ

Callia Toriz is currently an undergraduate student at Purdue University, where she studies kinesiology. She later hopes to pursue a Masters of Science in Athletic Training. Callia was born and raised in Panama, where she gained her passion for Model United Nations. Since 2021, Callia has attended a number of conferences where she has debated in General Assembly and Asamblea Nacional committees. She has also attended international conferences such as HACIA Democracy, HNMUNLA, NHSMUN, and McGill's SSUNS conference. During her time as a member of the club she was given the opportunity to be on the board of directors. She helped organize the school's debate conference and later became Director General of the club during her senior year.

TOPIC B: DIYA PATEL

Diya Patel is an undergraduate at the University of California, Riverside, where she studies Mechanical Engineering and Business Management with a focus in motorsports. She has been involved in Model United Nations for several years as a delegate, mentor, and conference staffer, with experience across committees including the Sixth Committee, UNODC, UNHCR, and other international affairs bodies. Beyond competing, Diya has mentored 35+ delegates in research, position paper writing, speeches, and more. She has continued her involvement in Model UN through committee staffing and policy research for background guides. Her research has focused on international conflict, peacebuilding, humanitarian issues, and the role of international institutions in addressing complex global challenges. Outside of Model UN, Diya is involved in her school's Formula SAE team and is the president and founder of her school's DECA team, competing across the world in various business principles. Combining all these elements, she brings a multi-faceted perspective to continuing global issues, hoping to pursue higher education and guide others in the process.

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