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PRESS RELEASE

MISCA Head of Mission appalled by Grenade attack on Civilians

Bangui, 28 March 2014 -- The Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission and Head of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA), Gen. Jean Marie Michel Mokoko is appalled by a grenade attack on innocent civilians, which took place last night at a funeral in a Bangui home, killing and injuring several persons. The attackers escaped from the crime scene and have not yet been identified or apprehended.

The Special Representative notes with profound dismay that an increasingly sophisticated arsenal of military-type assault weapons has been used in the recent spate of violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), and reiterates that the use of such weapons on civilians is strictly prohibited under international law and constitutes a War Crime. He calls on the CAR Transitional Authorities to do all in their power to bring to justice the cowardly perpetrators of such atrocious acts.

Furthermore, he strongly urges Community Leaders, Opinion Leaders, Religious Leaders, Political Party Leaders and Leaders of Civil Society Organizations to speak-up and use their influence to help end the current violence in their country. He particularly urges the local and international media to demonstrate a high sense of responsibility in reporting events in the CAR and refrain from further fanning the flames of hatred and animosity among the population.

The Special Representative conveys to the bereaved families the sincere condolences and deepest sympathy of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and wishes a prompt and complete recovery to the injured.

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