



**Quarterly Brief on the Human Rights Situation in the Central African Republic
January to March 2022**

Summary

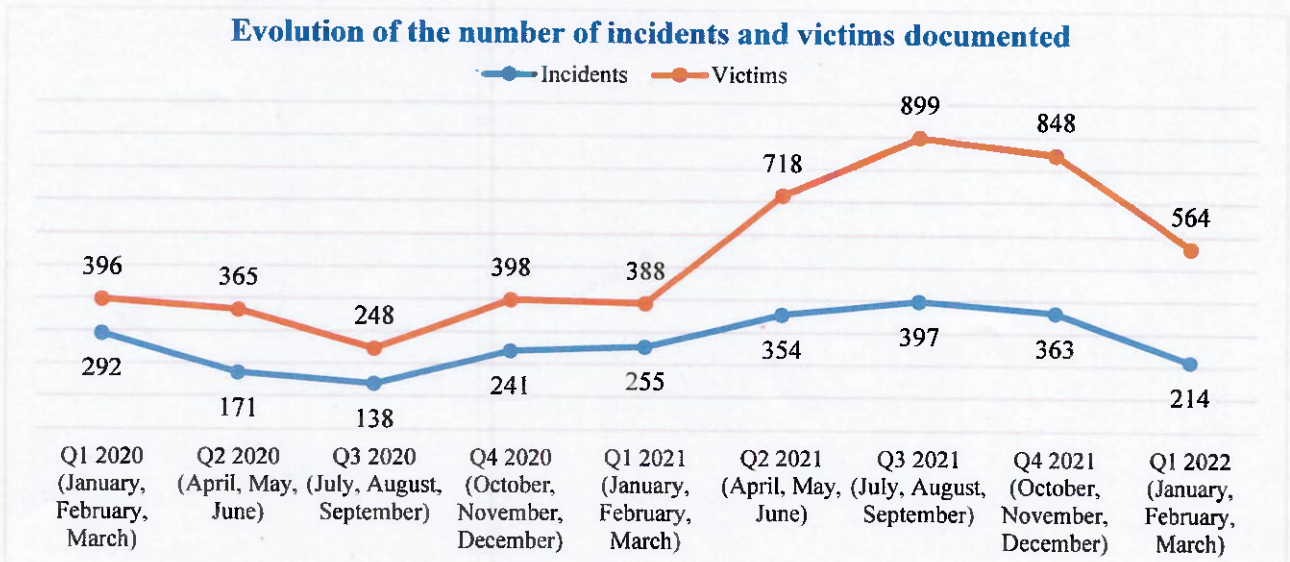
During the period under review the Human Rights Division (HRD) documented a decrease in the number of incidents and victims compared to the previous quarter, in line with the trends observed prior to April 2021.

A high number of violations of the right to life by killing was documented, as well as violations of the right to physical and mental integrity and cases of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). The HRD remains concerned over human rights violations and abuses committed during or in the context of military operations by State actors against armed groups as well as the use of proxies.

Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA together were responsible for the majority of incidents and victims recorded, however, among all perpetrators the other security personnel alone were responsible for the highest absolute number of victims (89), followed by FACA (68) and 3R (65).

General Trends

During the first quarter of 2022, the HRD, including the Women Protection Adviser’s Unit (WPA) and the Child Protection Section (CPS), documented and verified 214 incidents, representing 258 human rights violations and abuses and breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL)¹ that affected 564 victims. The data represents a significant decrease of 41.04 percent in the number of incidents and 33.49 percent in the number of victims, compared to the last quarter of 2021 during which the HRD had documented 363 incidents affecting 848 victims. However, it is important to note that these findings are in line with the number of incidents documented prior to the increase observed between April and December 2021.



¹ Several types of human rights violations and abuses may be recorded during a single incident, against different victims. The following data is based on the most serious type of violation per incident and the most serious type of violation per victim.

During this quarter, the proportion of incidents and victims attributed to armed groups and State actors remained stable. Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for the majority of incidents and victims, with 106 incidents, representing 128 violations and affecting 306 victims, i.e., nearly 50 percent of the incidents and violations and 54.25 percent of the victims documented. State actors² were responsible for 100 incidents, representing 120 violations and affected 235 victims, i.e. nearly 47 percent of the incidents and violations and 41.66 percent of the victims documented. In addition, the HRD also documented five incidents, representing six violations, and affecting 12 victims, attributed to other non-State actors, as well as four violations affecting eleven victims caused by stray bullets in three conflict-related incidents.

Even though the West of the country was the region most affected by human rights violations and abuses – with clashes between State actors and armed groups and related human rights incidents continuously taking place, this quarter FACA and OSP perpetrated a number of indiscriminate attacks, particularly in Haute-Kotto and Vakaga Prefectures, where they conducted operations against armed groups. The most notable ones took place in the villages of Aigbando and Gordil, respectively in Haute-Kotto and Vakaga prefectures.

Following FACA/OSP operations on 13 March in Gordil (Vakaga Prefecture), the HRD documented the killing of at least 20 civilians and pillaging and destruction of property.

From 16 to 18 January, FACA/OSP conducted an operation in Aigbando (Haute-Kotto Prefecture). The HRD documented the killing of at least 17 civilians, the rape of one girl, and the pillaging of the village of Aigbando. The HRD was able to confirm the presence of ex UPC combatants amongst the FACA and OSP.

This quarter, the HRD has investigated the attack on the village of Boyo (Ouaka) that took place from 6 to 13 December 2021. The HRD was able to confirm the killing of 20 Muslim civilians, the rape of five women and girls and the looting and burning of some 547 houses. The HRD was able to confirm the use of anti-Balaka elements to attack the village.

The attacks on both Boyo and Aigbando are in line with a trend HRD is increasingly documenting on the use of proxies by the FACA and OSP to commit human rights violations.

Violations

Killings and extrajudicial executions represent 11.24 percent of the violations and 14.36 percent of the victims documented (29 violations affecting 81 victims). State actors were responsible for the majority of these, with 15 cases affecting 56 victims, while armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for 12 cases affecting 21 victims. Two cases affecting four victims were due to stray bullets during conflict-related incidents between armed groups and State actors.

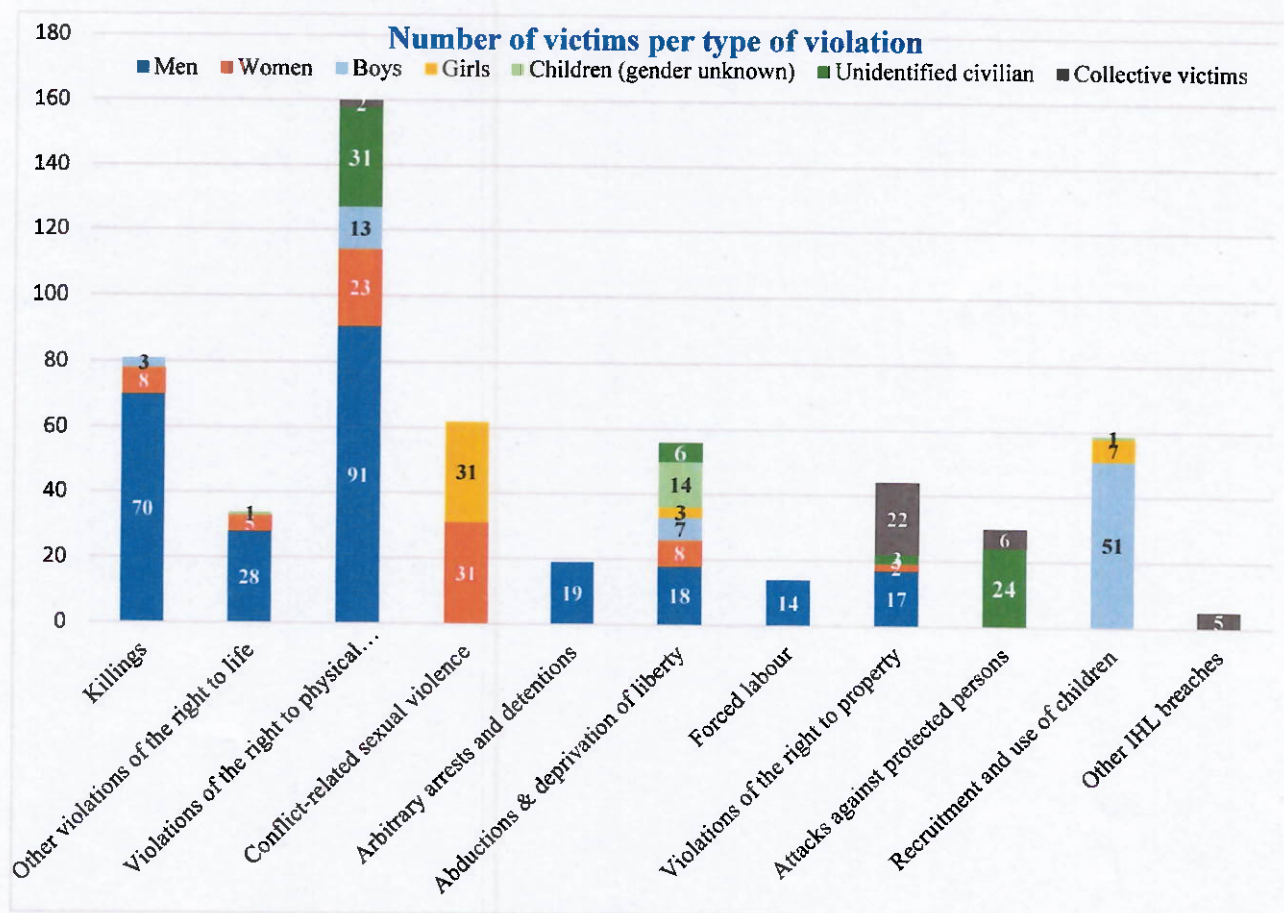
More specifically, FACA and OSP operating jointly were responsible for four cases affecting 38 victims, i.e. 46.91 percent of all civilian casualties documented during the reporting period. They are followed by the FACA (six cases affecting nine victims) and OSP (four cases affecting eight victims) acting separately. In addition, the HRD also documented and verified 21 other violations of the right to life, including attempted killing, enforced disappearance and death threats, affecting 34 victims. These were also mostly attributed to State actors (14 cases affecting 24 victims).

Violations of the right to physical integrity including torture, threats to physical and mental integrity, maiming and injuries, and ill-treatment, representing 24.80 percent of the total number of incidents and 28.36 percent of the total number of victims documented (64 violations, 160 victims). These incidents were perpetrated mostly by armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA (28 cases affecting 88 victims). State actors were responsible for 33 cases affecting 62 violations.

² State actors include State forces such as FACA, as well as other security personnel and allied forces.

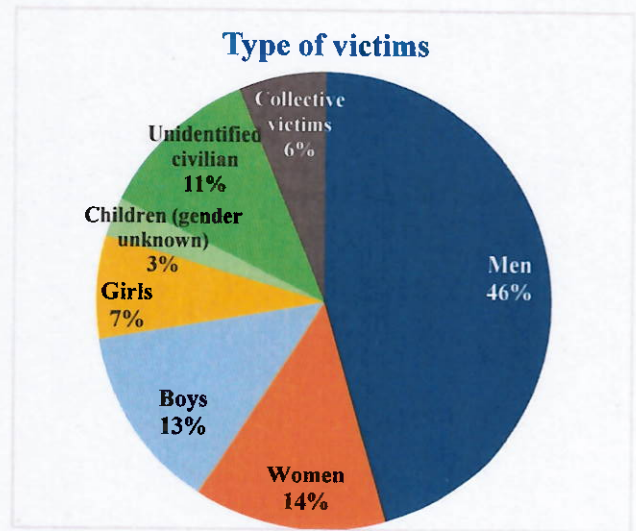
Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) incidents accounted for 18.60 percent of the total number of incidents and 10.99 percent of the total number of victims (48 violations, 62 victims). Of these cases, the vast majority were rapes (37 violations, 52 victims). The HRD documented eight cases of sexual slavery, affecting seven victims – one of them having been victimised in two separate incidents. Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA are responsible for a large majority of the CRSV cases documented (39 violations, 53 victims). State actors were responsible for seven violations affecting seven victims; while the LRA was responsible for the remaining two violations affecting two victims.

The HRD also documented and verified a large number of cases of recruitment and use of children by the national forces or armed groups (16 cases, 59 victims), of abductions (13 cases, 56 victims) and of attacks against protected persons (eight cases, 30 victims).

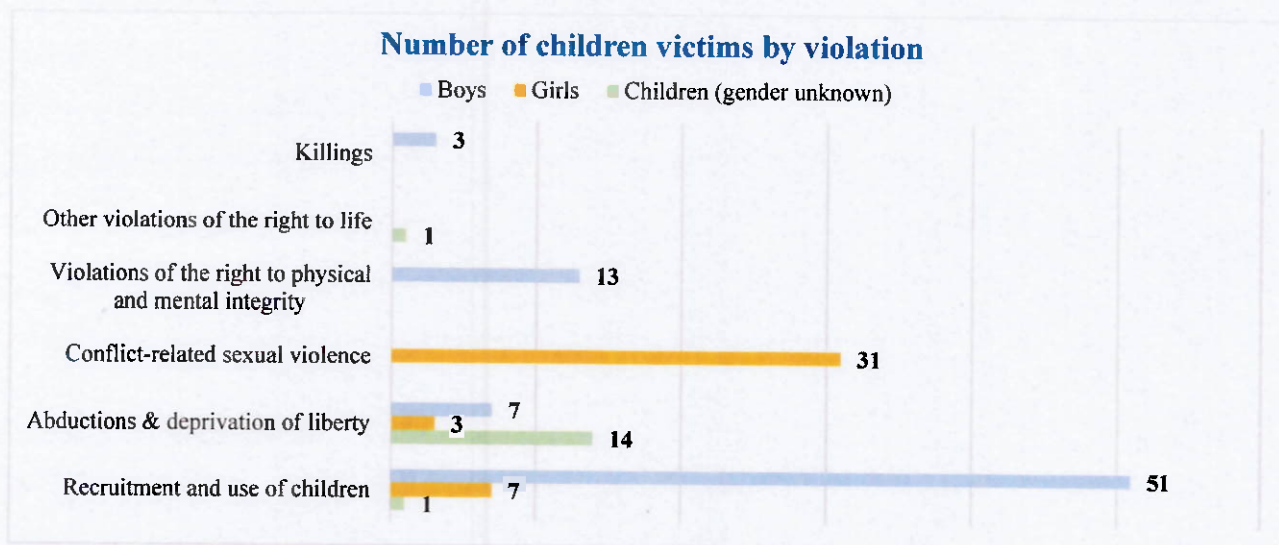


Victims

The HRD documented 214 incidents affecting 564 victims, of which 257 were men, 77 women, 74 boys, 41 girls, 16 unidentified children, 64 unidentified civilians and 35 groups of collective victims. In comparison with the previous quarter (848 victims) this represents a decrease of 33.49 percent. Although the number of victims is still 45.36 percent higher than the number documented in the first quarter of 2021 (388), this can be linked to difficulties in monitoring human rights violations due to the peak of the global pandemic and electoral period in CAR in early 2021. Men are the majority of victims (45.56 percent). In most cases, men are victims of violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (91 victims) and murder (70 victims). Women on the other hand represented only 13.65 percent of the total number of victims but accounted for 50 percent of the total number of victims of CRSV (31 victims). Women also fell victim to violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (23 victims).



Boys represented 13.12 percent of the victims and were mostly victims of recruitment in armed forces or armed groups (51 victims). Girls on the other hand represented 7.26 percent of the victims, most of them of CRSV (31 victims).



The 35 groups of collective victims, which represent 6.20 percent of the total number of victims, were mostly cases of destruction or appropriation of property (14 victims).

Perpetrators

Armed groups signatory to the APPR-CAR are presumed to be the perpetrators of nearly 50 percent of the total number of incidents and violations and responsible for 54.25 percent of the total number of victims (106 incidents representing 128 violations and affecting 306 victims). They are proportionally responsible for less incidents than in the previous quarter, during which 60.60 percent of the incidents and 57.19 percent of the victims were attributed to them.

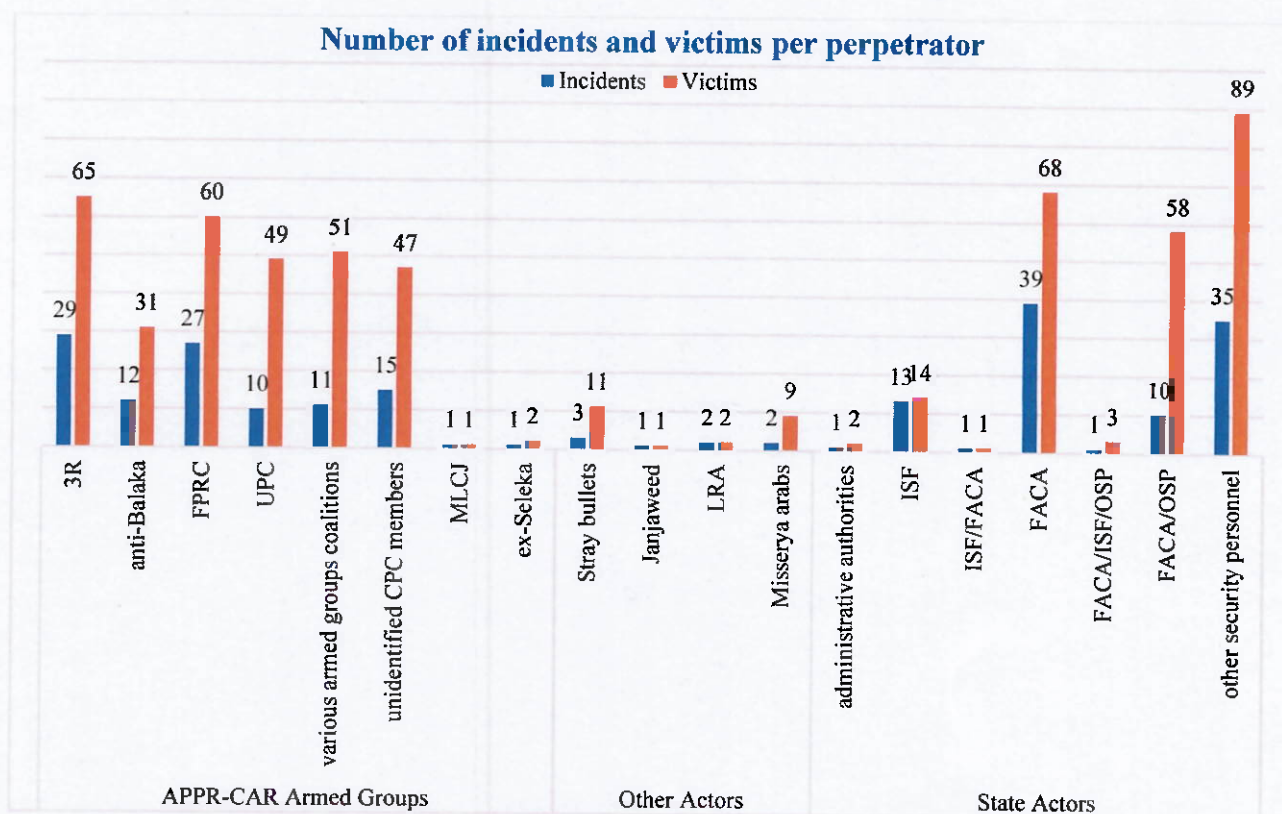
Among these armed groups, the main perpetrators are the 3R, with 13.55 percent of the total number of incidents and 11.36 percent of the total number of victims (29 incidents, representing 33 violations and affecting 65 victims), followed closely by the FPRC with 27 incidents representing 32 violations and affecting 60 victims.

The main human rights abuses and IHL breaches perpetrated by the signatory armed groups are violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (28 violations affecting 88 victims), CRSV (39 violations affecting 53 victims), and abductions and deprivation of liberty (12 violations affecting 51 victims).

State actors were responsible for nearly 47 percent of the total number of incidents and violations and 41.66 percent of the total number of victims (100 incidents, representing 120 violations and affecting 235 victims); marking an increase in proportion since the previous quarter, during which they accounted for 38.83 percent of the incidents and 39.38 of the victims.

Among State actors, OSP were the main perpetrators. Alone, they accounted for 16.35 percent of the total number of incidents and 15.78 percent of the total number of victims (35 incidents, representing 38 violations and affecting 89 victims). While working jointly with FACA and/or ISF, they were also involved in an additional 5.14 percent of the incidents and 10.81 percent of the victims (eleven incidents, representing 19 violations and affecting 61 victims). FACA acting alone were also responsible for around 18 percent of the total number of incidents and violations and 12.05 percent of the total number of victims (39 incidents, representing 47 violations and affecting 68 victims).

The main human rights violations perpetrated by State actors are violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (33 violations affecting 62 victims), violations of the right to life by killing (15 violations affecting 56 victims) and forced labour (10 cases affecting 28 victims).



Geographic Trends

By sectors

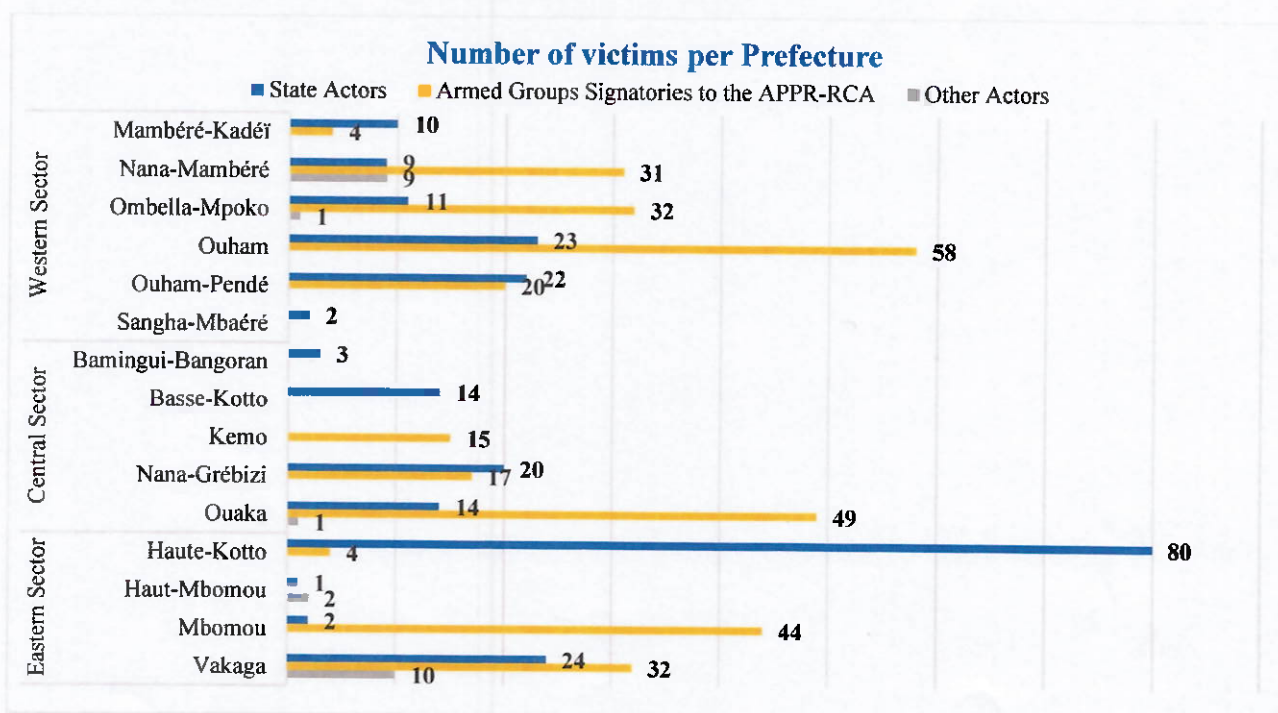
In the first quarter of 2022 the Western sector³ was the most affected region, accounting for 49.06 percent of the total number of incidents and 41.13 percent of the total number of victims (105 incidents, representing 126 violations and affecting 232 victims). In this sector, 51.42 percent of the incidents and 62.5 percent of the victims were attributed to armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA (54 incidents, representing 65 violations and affecting 145 victims). State actors were responsible for 46.66 percent of the incidents and 33.18 percent of the victims (49 incidents, representing 58 violations and affecting 77 victim). The remaining two incidents, affecting ten victims, were linked to stray bullets shot during clashes between armed groups and State actors. The vast majority of the incidents documented in this sector were violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (29 violations affecting 71 victims), followed by abductions and deprivation of liberty (nine violations affecting 42 victims), CRSV (26 violations affecting 35 victims), and violations of the right to life by killing (16 violations affecting 27 victims).

The Eastern sector was the second most affected region, with 31.77 percent of the incidents and 35.28 percent of the victims documented (68 incidents, representing 86 violations and affecting 199 victims). In this sector, 55.88 percent of the incidents were attributed to armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA but these affected only 40.20

³ The Western sector includes the Lobaye, Mambéré-Kadéï, Nana-Mambéré, Ombella M'Poko, Ouham, Ouham-Pendé and Sangha-Mbaéré Prefectures.

percent of the victims documented in the area (38 incidents, representing 46 violations and affecting 80 victims). On the contrary, State actors were responsible for 36.76 percent of the incidents but 53.76 percent of the victims (25 incidents, representing 34 violations and affecting 107 victims), indicating that these incidents affected a large number of victims. The remaining five incidents and 12 victims were attributed to other non-State actors, namely the Janjaweed, the LRA and the Misseriya Arabs. Most of the victims in this area were killed (eight violations of the right to life by killing, affecting 48 victims). Other common types of human rights violations and abuses were violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (22 violations affecting 47 victims) and CRSV (18 violations affecting 22 victims).

The Central sector⁴ represented the remaining 19.15 percent of the incidents and 23.58 percent of the victims documented (41 incidents, representing 46 violations and affecting 133 victims). In this sector, State actors are responsible for 63.41 percent of the incidents but only 38.34 percent of the victims documented (26 incidents, representing 28 violations and affecting 51 victims). Armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA on the other hand were responsible for 34.14 percent of the incidents but 60.90 percent of the victims (14 incidents, representing 17 violations and affecting 81 victims). This discrepancy is in part due to the high number of children separated from armed groups in this region. The remaining incidents and victims were caused by stray bullets shot during a conflict-related incident. The most common type of violation in this sector was the recruitment and use of children in national forces or armed groups (10 violations affecting 49 victims), followed by violations of the right to physical and mental integrity (13 violations affecting 43 victims).



By prefecture

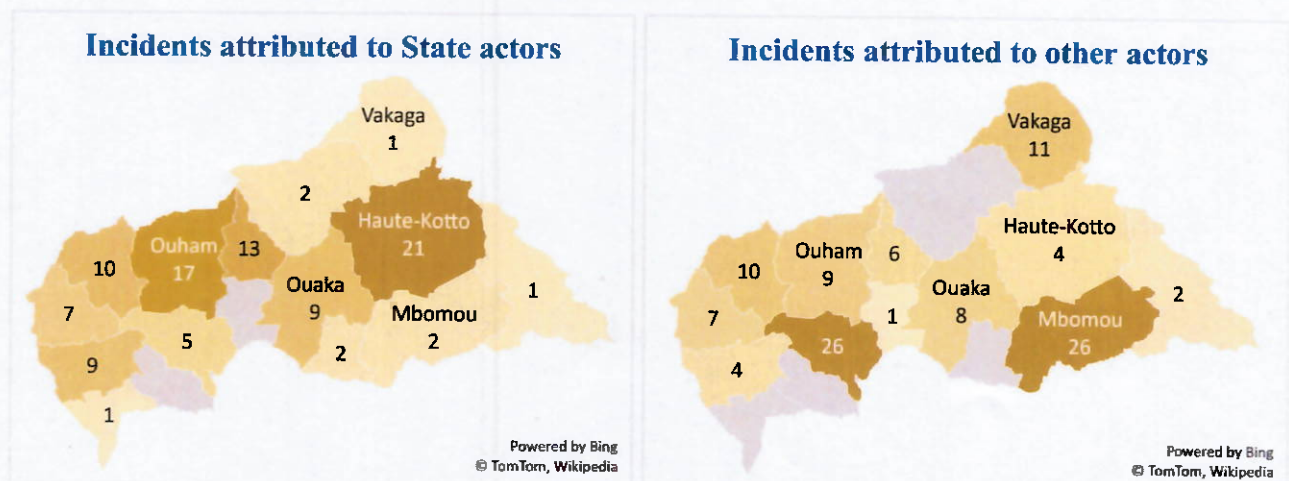
The Haute-Kotto and Ouham Prefectures were the most affected Prefectures during the reporting period, with around 12 percent of the total number of incidents and 14.5 percent of the total number of victims each (respectively 25 incidents, representing 32 violations and affecting 84 victims, and 26 incidents, representing 34 violations and affecting 81 victims). In Haute-Kotto, the most common type of violations were violations of the right to physical and mental health (eight violations affecting 24 victims) and violations of the right to life by killing (four violations

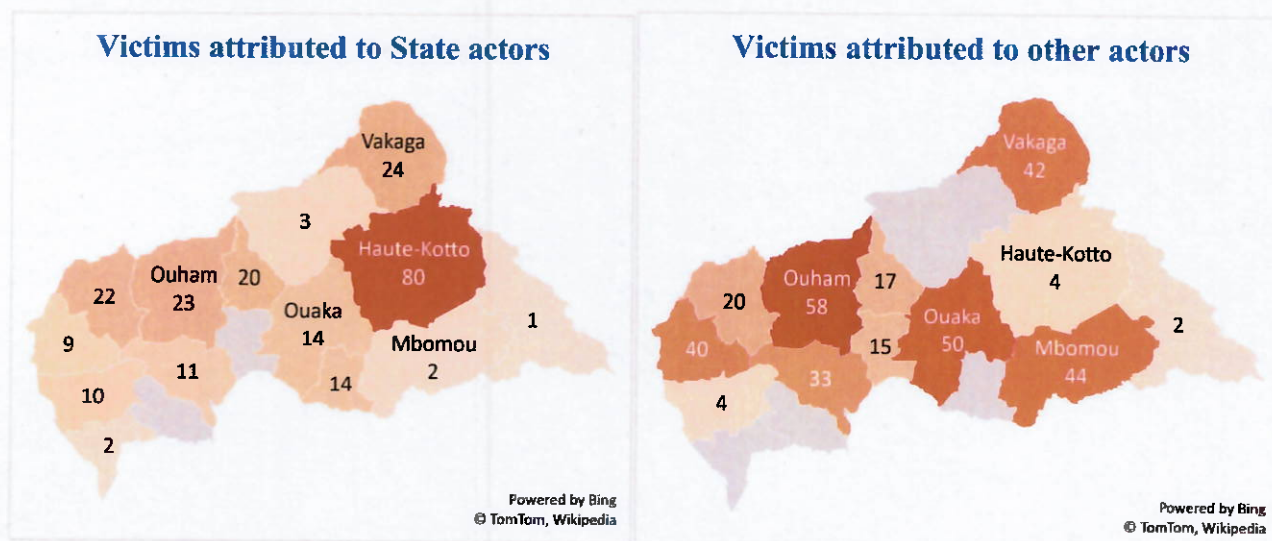
⁴ The Center Sector includes the Bamingui-Bangoran, Basse-Kotto, Kémo, Nana-Grébizi, and Ouaka Prefectures.

affecting 23 victims); most of which were perpetrated by State actors (21 incidents, representing 27 violations affecting 80 victims). The FACA/OSP operation in Aigbando on 16 and 17 January caused the death of 17 civilians; five other deaths occurred during the OSP attack on the Yanga mining site on 8 January. In Ouham prefecture, abductions were more common (three violations affecting 31 victims) and although most incidents were attributed to State actors (17 incidents, representing 19 violations and affecting 23 victims), armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for most victims (nine incidents, representing 15 violations and affecting 58 victims).

The Vakaga and Ouaka Prefectures followed with 5.60 percent of the incidents and 11.70 percent of the victims (12 incidents, representing 17 violations and affecting 66 victims) and 7.94 percent of the incidents and 11.34 percent of the victims (17 incidents, representing 22 violations and affecting 64 victims), respectively. In the Vakaga, 23 civilians were killed in two separate violations; the second most common type of violation was attacks against protected persons (two violations affecting 19 victims). Twenty civilians were killed in a single FACA/OSP operation in Gordil on 13 and 14 March. This is the only incident State actors were responsible for in the area, but it affected in total 24 victims; armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were responsible for eight incidents affecting 32 victims. In the Ouaka Prefecture, violations of the right to physical and mental integrity were by far the most common (eight violations, 38 victims), and armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were the biggest perpetrators of human rights abuses (seven incidents, representing ten violations and affecting 49 victims).

The Mbomou, Nana-Mambéré, Ombella M’Poko and Ouham-Pendé Prefectures all recorded a similar proportion of human rights violations abuses, representing in total around 11 percent of the incidents and 8.02 percent of the victims each. In the Nana-Mambéré and Ouham-Pendé, violations of the right to physical and mental integrity were the most common, as is the case overall across the country. In the Mbomou and Ombella M’Poko, however, the HRD recorded a high number of CRSV (respectively 14 violations affecting 18 victims and 21 violations affecting 26 victims). In all of these except Ouham-Pendé, armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA were the biggest perpetrators. In the Ouham-Pendé Prefecture, incidents, violations and victims were evenly split between armed groups signatories to the APPR-RCA (ten incidents, representing 11 violations and affecting 20 victims) and State actors (ten incidents, representing 13 violations and affecting 22 victims).





Recommendations

Considering the international human rights and international humanitarian law situation described and analyzed in this report, the HRD makes the following recommendations:

To all parties to the conflict

- To cease hostilities in accordance with the UN Secretary General's call on 23 March 2020 for an immediate global ceasefire and the ceasefire declared by President Touadéra on 15 October 2021 to give new impetus to peace and reconciliation.
- In accordance with SCR 2605 (2021), to end all violations and abuses committed against children as well as to end sexual and gender-based violence.

To the Central African Republic Government:

- To issue firm orders to FACA and OSP not to use pro-governmental militias or armed groups to conduct attacks against civilians;
- To conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into human rights violations by State forces and OSP in order to determine responsibilities and take appropriate disciplinary measures or even criminal sanctions;
- To continue to raise awareness for the respect of human rights and humanitarian obligations among its forces;
- To ensure that the competent services, namely the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces and the Central Inspectorates of the ISF, carry out their multi-faceted missions of investigation, control and inspection in the field. In addition, it is important that systematic investigations be carried out for any case deemed suspicious, including attacks against civilians and humanitarians; and
- To fight and sanction incitement to hatred and violence, particularly on social networks, which undermines the country's social cohesion.

To the armed groups:

- To immediately cease violence that threatens the protection of civilians;
- To immediately cease attacks against humanitarians and comply with IHL and their commitments to the APPR-RCA; and
- To cease all recruitments and use of minors within the armed groups.

To the International Community:

- To remind all parties involved in hostilities of their obligation to comply with international humanitarian law in all circumstances, including the obligation to facilitate humanitarian access;
- To monitor human rights violations with a view to fighting impunity and condemn serious human rights violations against civilians;
- To continue to support the transitional justice process in CAR, including support for the full operationalization of the *Commission vérité, justice, réparations et réconciliation* (CVJRR); and

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- To continue its support to the restoration of State authority, including the redeployment of administrators and basic services in regions and localities requiring their presence.