

Central African Republic: More Efforts Needed to Get the Special Criminal Court Operating

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The Central African Republic transitional government, the United Nations, and donors should intensify their efforts to establish a Special Criminal Court, 23 Central African and international human rights groups said today.

In June 2015, the Central African Republic's transitional government promulgated a law passed in April to establish a Special Criminal Court inside the national judicial system, consisting of national and international staff, to investigate and prosecute the gravest crimes committed in the country since 2003, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. Our organizations welcome the steps taken by the transitional government to put an end to impunity for atrocities committed in the Central African Republic, notably through the establishment of a Special Criminal Court.

"These efforts must continue and be supported by international actors to ensure that the court envisioned on paper becomes a reality as quickly as possible."

Despite a difficult security situation, the Central African authorities have taken some first steps to establish the court. The government has, among other measures, selected and made available a building to enable the first investigative and prosecutorial activities of the court. It has prepared some of the decrees required for the court to function, and developed job descriptions for recruiting the court's future staff. The UN has continued to support this process, notably by sending a team of experts to assess the logistical and financial needs of the court, and by preparing a project plan to support the establishment of the court.

(...)

"It is clear that justice for the grave crimes committed in the Central African Republic is an essential building block for durable peace in the nation," the groups said.

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