CAR ACTING HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR CALLS FOR PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS AND RESPECT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Bangui 2 February 2017 – The outbreak of violence between two armed groups on 2 February in the northern town of Bocaranga, Ouham Pende province, has led to the new displacement of 9,000 persons who have sought refuge in the forest about 15 to 20 km away from the town. The conflict has left among others, international non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) compounds attacked and pillaged. One of the NGO compounds was burnt down. Shops, a church and the market have been systematically pillaged. The market was partially burnt. Civilians are reportedly killed and injured during the clashes.

Prior to the conflict in Bocaranga, there were already 15,000 persons from Kouï, (35km East of Bocaranga) who were displaced to the town due to the violence that occurred on 21 September 2016. The Acting Humanitarian Coordinator in the Central African Republic (CAR), Dr. Michel Yao, condemns the attack on civilians and NGO compounds and calls for respect of the International Humanitarian Law as well as unhindered humanitarian access.

“I urge all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law and to ensure the protection of civilians. Attack against aid workers is a crime against humanity”, said Dr. Yao.

CAR currently has over 400,000 persons who have been displaced due to conflict. The new displacement of civilians in Bocaranga is coming at a time when humanitarian needs are increasing while financial resources remain meagre. In 2017, 2.2 million people in CAR require immediate humanitarian assistance and the Humanitarian Response Plan asks for 400 million United States dollars.

For more information, please contact
OCHA CAR: Joseph Inganji, Head of Office +236 70738730, inganji@un.org
Laura Fultang, Public Information Officer + 236 70 18 80 64, fultangl@un.org
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