

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 26, 2012 10:52 AM
To: H
Subject: FW: Central African Republic Update 12/26 at 0720 EST

From: Randolph, Lawrence M
Sent: Wednesday, December 26, 2012 10:26 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Cc: S_SpecialAssistants; Johnson, Brock A
Subject: FW: Central African Republic Update 12/26 at 0720 EST

FYI

From: MacDonald, Andrew T
Sent: Wednesday, December 26, 2012 10:07 AM
To: SES_DutyDeputies; D(B); D(N); P; S_SpecialAssistants
Cc: SES-O; SES-O_SWO
Subject: Central African Republic Update 12/26 at 0720 EST

Dear Colleagues,

The Operations Center convened a conference call today at approximately 7:20EST to discuss the current situation in Bangui, Central African Republic, at the request of Ambassador Wohlers. Below is a readout of that call.

There will be another call today at 12:00EST to provide an update on the situation.

Please let us know if we can provide additional information.

Thank you,
Andrew

Andrew T. MacDonald
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Participants

Johnnie Carson, AF Assistant Secretary
Don Yamamoto, AF PDAS
Michele Bond, CA Acting Assistant Secretary
Larry Wohlers, Embassy Bangui Ambassador (and team)
Matt McKeever, Embassy Yaoundé A/DCM
Scott Tiedt, A/LM
Robin Meyer, AF/C
Kathleen Austin-Ferguson, M
Elizabeth Cherry CA/OCS
COL Anne Fenton, AFRICOM
Paul Folmsbee, AF/EX
Steven Donlon, CA/OCS

COL Stropes, OSD Policy
Steve Hunsucker, CA/OCS
Sumreen Mirza, M
Chinwe Obianwu, AF
Maria Olson, CMS
Vivian Nguyen, CMS
Andrew MacDonald, S/ES-O
Andrew Veprek, S/ES-O
Diane Holcombe, S/ES-O

Potential Evacuee Count

40+Amcits (unofficial community) and 8 COM personnel

Security Climate

The security situation has deteriorated. There were demonstrations in front of the U.S. Embassy last night. Apparently, the demonstrators were receiving food and water from a jeep with military license plates. The demonstrators remained overnight and departed this morning at 0900 local time. Currently, it is quiet in the vicinity of the U.S. compound, but, there are rumors of additional demonstrations.

Following the U.S. Embassy demonstration, a larger group demonstrated in front of the French Embassy. This demonstration became violent, as some demonstrators scaled the embassy wall, tore down the French flag, broke embassy windows, and tore down a part of the embassy fence. French guards fired tear gas and shot in air. Eventually CAR gendarmes interposed themselves between the demonstrators and the embassy. The French are planning on redeploying some of their military forces from the airport to the embassy. At this time, there are no plans by the French to authorize departure of embassy personnel.

Ambassador Wohlers met with the foreign minister who said the president will enter into dialogue without preconditions with the rebels. He said the president will come halfway towards the demands of the rebels, which will likely not be enough to satisfy the rebels. The Ambassador also spoke to officials close to the president reminding them of their obligations to protect the embassy.

Post Staffing

Embassy operations will be suspended on Saturday, if not before. The embassy issued an emergency message on 12/25 and asked the American citizen community to avoid the area around the French embassy via SMS text message on 12/26. Post will communicate to the American citizen community the embassy is suspending operations and further recommend they make plans to depart. Post held a town hall meeting today advising the FSNs the embassy is preparing for an "orderly shutdown."

Post is considering which foreign mission will serve as the protecting power for the United States. (Ambassador Wohlers confirmed following the conference call the French have agreed to serve as protecting power.)

Flight Options

Post states the first potential available flight out is on Kenya Airways on Saturday, December 29. There are likely not enough seats for all American citizens in the country, were they to want to depart, and follow-up research by A/LM indicates the Kenya airlines flight is full but there may be seats available on a Tagg Angola airlines flight on 12/29). In addition, the three AFRICOM personnel have sensitive equipment that cannot be transported via commercial air.

Follow Up

The next conference call will take place at 12:00 EST on 12/26. Post will re-determine commercial flight availability and the number of American citizens who plan to depart. Post will also discuss the latest developments with the American citizen community and further recommend they make plans to depart, though not all are expected to take this advice. The DATT will coordinate with AFRICOM to determine what military assets are available to evacuate special

operations personnel and their equipment, along with COM personnel and members of the American citizen community.