



Press Release

MINURCAT/PR/010/05/2008

3 May 2008

Security Is Returning to Birao

N'Djamena, Chad – Six Cabinet members of the Central African Republic and two high level UN representatives visited Birao, the capital of the Vakaga region, on 3 May, 2008, to assess the security situation on the ground and to get a better understanding of the activities of the European Force, EUFOR, and the United Nations Mission in Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).

The Government delegation was led by the Minister of Planning, economy and International Cooperation.

The Province of Vakaga is an area slightly over the size of Denmark, but home to some 38,000 people only. To reach it by road from the capital Bangui, takes at least five days and the travel is only possible during the dry season. A year ago, Birao, which lies in the triangle corner where the borders of Central African Republic, Chad and Sudan meet, was attacked by armed men, destroying 75% of the infrastructure, and causing 95% of its population to flee to camps protected by the international community.

Today, in view of the deployment of EUFOR and MINURCAT in the region, life is returning to normal. The local administration is being reestablished, while houses and buildings are being rebuilt. Moreover, two mobile telephone companies are now connecting the town to the world.

The challenge remains to make security sustainable. EUFOR's military mandate will be complemented by MINURCAT's work in strengthening the local Police and Gendarmerie, as well as helping in the areas of justice and local government.

For more information, please contact:

Penangnini TOURE, Spokesperson

Email: tourep@un.org – Intermission: 194 6353 – Mobile: +235 690 0034