

Morocco's support for the Central African Republic (CAR) has never wavered, even at the height of the crisis in this country, said, Thursday, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad, Mr. Nasser Bourita, on the occasion of the CAR second ministerial meeting, held on the sidelines of the 75th UN General Assembly.

Morocco, which chairs the Central African Republic configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, has "historic relations" with the Central African Republic, and these ties are growing stronger over the years, thanks to a solidarity-based, concrete and multifaceted partnership, underlined Mr. Bourita during this meeting co-chaired by CAR president Faustin Archange Touadéra, president of the AU Commission Mouassa Faki Mahamat, and President of the Commission of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Gilberto Da Piedade Verissimo.

The Minister recalled that the Kingdom was the first country to send its peacekeepers under the UN banner, even before the creation of the UN peacekeeping mission in the CAR, MINUSCA, adding that, today, nearly 750 men and women are deployed under this mission, and enjoy the trust and respect of the local populations.

"Morocco will remain, as it has always been, by the side of the Government and the People of the sister Central African Republic in its resolute quest for lasting stability and prosperity", said Mr. Bourita during this high-level meeting held three months ahead of the organization of the presidential and legislative elections and more than a year and a half after the signing of the Political Agreement for Peace and Stability in the CAR, on February 6, 2019.

The ministerial meeting also aimed to take stock of the progress made in the implementation of this political agreement, to discuss with all partners the main challenges that must be addressed and to underline the importance of interventions in the areas of development and humanitarian action, which are essential for ensuring the sustainability of peace and stabilization efforts.

Mr. Bourita underlined that the Central African Republic Configuration remains mobilized to support the Central African government, in its efforts to foster peace, specifying that since the last high-level meeting of September 26, 2019, the work of the Configuration has focused mainly on the preparation of the elections and the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

He added that the Configuration will continue to mobilize and advocate for the other important aspects of the upcoming electoral process, in particular the need to ensure optimal security in order to enable Central Africans of age to vote and fulfill their duty in the best conditions.

In addition, it will be necessary to continue mobilizing donors, CAR partners as well as neighboring countries, in order to guarantee the vote of displaced people and refugees, who constitute a significant part of the voters, said the Minister. The success of the next elections is a real challenge, because of its political, security, financial and health dimensions. This is why the entire international community, as well as the donors, are more than ever called upon to mobilize and finance the 9 million dollars which are still lacking and, thus, allow the elections to be held in a peaceful environment, Mr. Bourita insisted.

Recalling the humanitarian situation in CAR which was impacted by COVID-19, the Minister noted that the country requires a renewed commitment from the international community to fill the urgent financing gap of the humanitarian response plan. (End)