

The Third Conference on National Dialogues, 5-6 April 2017

The House of the Estates, Helsinki

Dialogue in CAR: Historical Pathways, Local Dynamics, and the Role of Regional Influence

This session will incorporate historical perspectives, local dynamics and regional factors into a holistic dialogue about the opportunities and challenges of peacebuilding and national unity in the Central African Republic.

In the course of CAR's transition following the de-escalation of the 2012 conflict, several grassroots-level consultations with religious and traditional community leaders preceded the Bangui Forum and the successful 2016 elections.

As CAR engages in a national dialogue to reestablish civil society and reconnect the seat of government with outlying areas within the country, **the panel will compare the present dialogue with past iterations to articulate best practices and lessons learned for the process moving forward, taking into consideration the local level dynamics.** Given the precarious state of its borders and the ongoing refugee crisis throughout the region, the panel will further discuss **how regional and international actors outside CAR, as well as the INGO community within the country can support the national dialogue without undermining the government's efforts to unify the country.**

Panel:

Mr. Pekka Haavisto, Member of the Finnish Parliament, Special Representative of the Foreign Minister on Mediation (Moderator)

President Catherine Samba-Panza, Former President of the Central African Republic

Imam Modibo Bachir Walidou, Deputy Imam of the Central Mosque in Bangui

Ambassador Hamuli Baudouin Kabarhuzato, Director of Political Affairs and of the Early Warning Mechanisms of Central Africa (MARAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

Mr. Caesar Poblicks, Projects Manager for East and Central Africa Programme, Conciliation Resources