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Audience with the president of the Central African Republic: the Church's contribution to reconciliation and reconstruction

Vatican City, 18 April 2016 – This morning the Holy Father Francis received in audience, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the president of the Central African Republic, Faustin Archange Touadéra, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, the warm welcome offered to the Holy Father during his visit to Bangui last November was evoked. It was shown that the recent electoral process and the renovation of the country's institutions are taking place in a constructive climate, with the contribution of dialogue between religious confessions, and the hope was expressed that this may mark the beginning of a time of peace and prosperity for the entire nation. At the same time, it emerged that the consequences of the conflicts of recent years continue to weigh upon the population, and the important role of the international Community in supporting the development of the country was emphasized.

Attention then turned to the good bilateral relations between the Holy See and the Central African Republic, and the Parties expressed their mutual understanding that these may be further consolidated in the framework of international law. Appreciation was expressed for the contribution that the work of the Church and her Pastors brings to society, especially in the fields of education and healthcare, and also with a view to reconciliation and national reconstruction.