UN Reports Two More Sexual Abuse Cases in CAR Peacekeeping Mission

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By AFP

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The United Nations on Monday reported two new sexual abuse cases allegedly involving peacekeepers in the Central African Republic, one implicating a contingent from Burundi and the other a Moroccan soldier.

The latest cases raise to 25 the number of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation allegations received by the UN mission in the Central African Republic since the start of the year, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Six other cases of alleged sexual abuse by peacekeepers have been reported in other UN missions since the start of the year, he said.

Members of a Burundian peacekeeping unit based in the town of Sibut in the center of the country have been accused of involvement in the rape a 14-year-old girl, according to the UN spokesman.

The case was referred to the UN mission by UNICEF, the UN children's agency, Dujarric said.

The Moroccan soldier, who was not identified, has been accused of sexually exploiting an adult woman in February in the southern city of Bangassou.

The governments involved have been notified and Morocco said it would conduct an investigation, Dujarric said.

Faced with proliferating sexual abuse scandals involving UN peacekeepers, particularly in the CAR, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has vowed to repatriate entire units if necessary and the UN Security Council passed a resolution to that effect on March 11.

"Obviously that (repatriation) remains an open possibility for any contingent involved in systematic abuses," Dujarric said.

Burundi has 1,128 soldiers and police in the UN peacekeeping force in CAR and Morocco has 741. The mission has some 12,000 troops in all.

On Friday, the UN mission had said it received new allegations of sexual exploitation and abuses by UN and non-UN personnel in the Central African Republic's Kemo district in 2014-15. Those were separate from the cases announced Monday by United Nations, Dujarric said.

Of the 69 alleged sexual abuse cases reported by the United Nations in 2015, more than half were in just two of the 16 UN peacekeeping missions around the world. CAR accounted for 22 and the Democratic Republic of Congo 16.