

FOCUS ON

CHAD



L'OSSEVRATORIO
Associazione Nazionale
Vittime Civili di Guerra
ONUS

RESEARCH CENTRE
ON CIVILIAN VICTIMS
OF CONFLICTS



Map No. 3788 Rev. 10 United Nations
March 2014

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Last update June 2016

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Darfurians refugees in Eastern Chad

Credit: CC BY-SA, UNHCR / F. Noy

Source: Flickr.com

THE COUNTRY AT A GLANCE

The Republic of Chad is a landlocked country in Central Africa. Chad's Sahelian strip was first part of the Kanem Empire and later of French Equatorial Africa, until it became a French oversea territory and, in 1960, an independent country. The period after independence saw increasing interethnic tensions that descended into civil war, involving also the participation of French and Libyan forces. The civil war was followed by periods of dictatorships marked by political and interethnic violence that resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. In 1990, Idriss Déby managed to take power and win following elections, but his authoritarian management style and his unilateral changes to the constitution in order to stay in power fueled internal tensions, and led to more violence and a the second civil war. Currently, despite the beginning of oil exploitation in 2003 that superseded the traditional cotton industry as the country's primary source of export earnings, Chad is still one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the world. This is due not only to the recurrent episodes of internal violence, but also to the spillover of the Darfur crisis in Sudan, and of the conflict against Boko Haram. In early November 2014, growing social resentment turned into protests in Ndjamena, Moundou and Sarh. Today the country faces thus a variety of complex and interrelated challenges, such as the management of the new wealth coming from crude oil, the violence involving anti-government forces based in different parts of the country, and the tensions with the presidential elections in 2016. In 2016, Chad remains plagued by political violence and recurrent attempted coups d'état.

| | |
|--|--|
| FLAG |  |
| NAME | Republic of Chad République du Tchad Gumhūriyyat Tšād |
| CAPITAL | N'Djamena |
| OFFICIAL AND VERNACULAR LANGUAGE | Arabic French |
| POPULATION | 13.6 million |
| | 27.7% Sara 12.3% Arab 10.5% Daza 9.5% Mayo-Kebbi 9.0% Kanem-Bornou 8.7% Ouaddaï 6.7% Hadjarai 6.5% Tandjilé 4.7% Fitri-Batha 6.4% other 0.3% unknown |
| ETHNIC GROUPS | |
| NEIGHBOURS | Libya Sudan Central African Republic Cameroon Nigeria Niger |
| TOTAL OF CIVILIANS AFFECTED (2016) | 3.8 million |
| GDP (2016) | USD 7.5 billion |
| PEOPLE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE (2016) | 1 million |
| LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH | 51.6 years |
| CHADIAN REFUGEES | 388.000 |
| HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX | 0.3 (184/187) |
| IDPS | 103.044 |
| GLOBAL PEACE INDEX | 2.4 (136/163) |
| CORRUPTION PERCEPTION RANKING | 147/168 |

INTRODUCTION

Geopolitical context

Despite the increasing importance of crude oil, which represents the 96% of its export and replaced cotton as main economic activity, over 80% of Chad's population relies on subsistence farming and livestock raising for their livelihood. The absence of almost any non-oil related international business tie, is a direct result of persistent internal instability, which makes foreign investors wary. At international level, Chad relies heavily on France for military and intelligence support, as it is considered a key country for regional stability. At regional level, the dynamics of the conflicts in Chad are inextricably linked to the broader geopolitics of the Sahel. Years of internal troubles, porous borders, and a fragmented society render Chad acutely vulnerable to instability. The country is in fact part of the so called 'tormented triangle', along with Sudan and the Central African Republic. In addition, with jihadist fighters prowling Libya's deserts to the north, al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb active in the west, and rebels and janjaweed militia battling in Sudan's Darfur region to its east, the position of Chad has especially been delicate. Already in 2004, Eastern Chad struggled to cope with refugees fleeing the conflict in the Central African Republic and Sudan. Sudanese militia also clashed with Chadian troops, leading to serious diplomatic disputes between the two countries. The Chad-Sudan border was not reopened until 2010, after being closed for almost seven years. The first semester of 2016 saw a relative stabilisation of the overall situation, despite the resumption of military operations on the border with Nigeria and Niger. The Chadian army has deployed troops to several peacekeeping missions, and has also pledged, with Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Benin to contribute to a joint force of 8,700 troops to fight Boko Haram.

Peacekeeping missions: OAU (1980 – 1982), EUFOR (2008 – 2009), MINURCAT (2007 – 2010), Multi-national Joint Task Force (MJTF, tbd). Other peacekeeping forces: France (opération Épervier, 1986 – 2014; opération Barkhane, since 2014)

Main UN documents on Chad

- [Human Rights Committee Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Chad \[CCPR/C/TCD/CO/2\]](#), 15 April 2014
- [UN Secretary-General Report on the protection of civilians in Chad \[S/2011/278\]](#), 29 April 2011
- [UN Secretary-General report on children and armed conflict in Chad \[S/2011/64\]](#), 9 February 2011
- [UNSC presidential statement on the situation in Chad and CAR \[S/PRST/2010/29\]](#), 20 December 2010
- [UNSC presidential statement called on Chad and Sudan to respect and fully implement their mutual commitments \[S/PRST/2009/13\]](#), 8 May 2009

The genesis of the conflict

President Déby's third term victory in heavily contested elections boycotted by the opposition in 2006, marked the beginning of a period of increasing ethnic violence in eastern Chad. The gravity of the situation was defined as genocide-prone by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Rebel forces 's attempts take over the capital in 2006 and in 2008 were unsuccessful, while the 2013 coup against President Deby that had been in preparation for several months was foiled by Chadian security forces. The 2010 agreement on the normalization of relations between Chad and Sudan put an end to the five-year war, marking the return of Sudan-related rebels to their country. The reopening of the border between the two countries after seven years of closure, and the deployment of a joint force to secure the border, the internal fronts and the fight against Boko Haram are still causing serious instability and humanitarian consequences. During last months, Chad has announced its involvement in brokering a peace deal between Boko Haram and Nigeria. Large-scale violence has recently flared up, involving anti-government forces based in different parts of the country, including an on-off insurgency in the north, where there are also frequent clashes between farmers and nomads over land use rights.

Peace talks and agreements

The first peace process constituted the series of Lagos negotiation in the 1970s, which saw intensive negotiations between Nigeria and Chad, which brought about the conclusion of the Lagos Accord. Internally, Chad has successfully concluded a number of peace agreements with most rebel groups, although most of them have not been observed. Here it is a non-exhaustive list for reference, starting from the most recent:

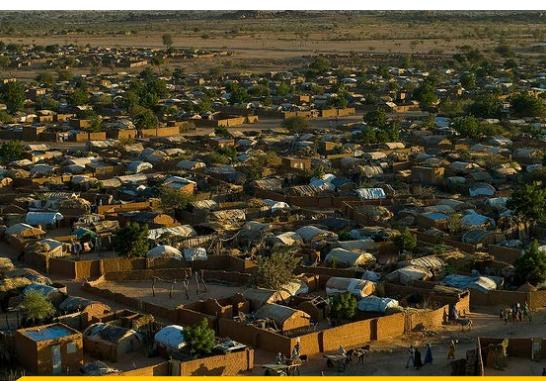
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad \(MDJT\)**](#) (December 2003)
- [**Draft Agreement Between Government of Chad and the National Resistance Army \(ANR\)**](#) (January 2003)
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad \(MDJT\)**](#) (January 2002)
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Armed Resistance against Anti-Democratic Forces \(RAFAD\)**](#) (June 2000)
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Chadian National Liberation Front - People's Armed Forces \(Frolinat-FAP\)**](#) (August 1997)
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Armed Forces for a Federal Republic \(FARF\)**](#) (April 1997)
- [**Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Action for Unity and Development**](#) (January 1996)

- [Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Movement for Democracy and Development \(MDD\)](#) (November 1995)
- [Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Movement for Democracy and Development \(MDD\) and the National Revival Committee for Peace and Democracy \(CSNPD\)](#) (October 1992)
- [Agreement Between Government of Chad and the Chadian National Front](#) (September 1992)

In 2004, Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement was signed in N'djamena, Chad, with limited results. Finally, on August 13 2007, an Agreement called on the Chadian government to reform critical electoral institutions, undertake a credible electoral census and demilitarize politics in order to ensure fair and transparent elections. Even this last agreement has been poorly implemented, affecting the possibility to bring about peace.

HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

Between 2003 and 2011, Chad progressed significantly in poverty reduction, with the national poverty rate falling from 55% to 47%. However, progress on non-monetary poverty has been modest, and despite improvements in school attendance and access to clean drinking water, many Chadians still face severe deprivations of basic needs. Chad is in fact still ranked 184 out of 187 countries, according to the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). Higher food prices due to moderate levels of agricultural production in 2013, falling oil prices, and the closure of the border with Nigeria (linked to concerns about Ebola and Boko Haram), could further aggravate the already critical situation of many families. The status quo has significantly worsened because of the heavy consequences of Boko Haram's tactics, and military reaction of Chadian security forces, who have scaled up military operations and performed joint operations with neighboring countries. As a result, civilians continue to be affected, perpetuating the increase in casualties and displacements.



Sunset time, people are going home back to Farchana camp from their distant field
Credit: CC BY-SA, UNHCR / F. Noy
Source: Flickr.com

Shelter

As of August, the total number of internally displaced people due to conflict amounts to 103,044. In total, Chad hosts around 750,000 displaced people, including long-term refugees from CAR and Sudan as a result of the CAR conflict and the Boko Haram attacks. According to latest estimates, nearly 85,500 IDPs are living in protracted displacement in the east, facing difficulties accessing shelter, land, and income-generating activities. In the South, where there is record number of returnees' sites, 6,623 emergency shelters were built in 2015, while countrywide, a total of 8,951 shelters were provided just by UNHCR as of May 2015. In Chad, the shelter situation is worsened by the pressure on existing resources not only by resident population and the IDPs, but also by the continuous arrival of refugees.



In a tent, a midwife checks the arm circumference of a 12-week-pregnant woman to verify whether she is undernourished

Credit: CC BY-ND, ECHO/Isabel Coello
Source: Flickr.com

Health

In Chad, 2.5 million people are reported to be in need of healthcare, as the health system is struggling under the strain of insufficient human and financial resources further stretched by the influx of refugees. According to 2016 estimates, the country relies on only 450 doctors for 13.2 million people. Chad is vulnerable to epidemics, such as cholera (172 cases in 2014) and measles (10.000 cases in 2014), with a relatively high morbidity rate, especially among children up to five years of age. Suspected measles cases continue to be reported in 12 districts of the country, with 189 cases and three deaths reported in Abeche, eastern Chad, in June alone. Chad recorded almost 1 million cases of malaria in 2014, which is also the first cause of child mortality. Maternal mortality rates are also extremely high, with 1084 deaths per 100.000 births. The epidemiologic situation is further complicated by the insufficiency of vaccination programs, as for example only 34% of children under one have been vaccinated in returnee sites in eastern Chad.



Women in Mao, where water is provided by a water tower. Access to clean water is often a problem in Chad

Credit: CC BY-SA 2.5, Les BcBride
Source: Wikipedia Commons

Water and sanitation

The country is in dire need of drinking water and water services, especially in northern areas, regularly struck by draughts and devastating floods. In 2015 alone, around 772,000 people throughout the country have hit by chronic drought, and 206,000 people have been struck by floods mostly in eastern Chad. Only 52% of the population in Chad has access to drinking water and 12% to sanitation services, with only 4% households, 30% schools, and 50% health centers securing access to some sort of improved sanitation. In terms of access to sanitation, latest estimates indicated only a 9% increase, with little improvement in the last year.



A family in Breidjing Camp in Chad with food expenditure for one week

Credit: CC BY 2.0, Mark Knobil
Source: Flickr.com

Food security

Due to the significant drop in agricultural production, and despite ongoing emergency food assistance, in 2015 more than a quarter of Chad's population is food insecure with a risk of deterioration. Analysis in first trimester of 2016 estimated over one million people suffering from severe food insecurity during the lean season, an increase of more than 400,000 compared to the 2015 lean season. Latest estimates indicate that needs for food assistance rised in 2016 partly due to price spikes registered all over the country, growing cross-border insecurity and increasing number of refugees. Although agricultural con-

ditions are reported to be improving, livelihoods have been affected by the above-mentioned price peaks, decreasing inflow of remittances from overseas family members originating from countries torn by conflict such as Libya, and the shutdown of the Nigerian border. Trends in acute malnutrition show a deterioration in several regions. The implementation of emergency humanitarian response to acute malnutrition is a priority in 20 regions and in refugee camps and sites of returnee and internally displaced people (IDPs).



Darfuran refugees from Sudan in Djabal camp return home from school carrying their exercise and rough books on the head

Credit: CC BY-SA, UNHCR / F. Noy

Source: Flickr.com

Education

In Chad, primary school is compulsory but only 68% of male children attend school. School attendance rate of children aged 5 to 14 is as low as 39%. According to latest estimates, 53% of children aged 5 to 14 years are working children, and 30% of children aged 7 to 14 years combine work and school. The situation is even worse for refugees' children, as more than 82% of Nigerian refugees' children lack formal education. Overall, Chad has one of the lowest literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa (33%). Higher education is provided only at the University of N'Djamena.



A training of the Humanitarian Mine Action program at the Chad National Demining Training Center in N'djamena

Credit: CC BY, Capt. James O'Hara and Staff Sgt.

Kody R. Williams

Source: Flickr.com

Protection

From January to May 2015, 528 incidents (96% women and 23% minors) of Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) were reported, including physical assault and battery (45%), psychological abuse (25%), assault and rape (8%), force marriage (8%) and sexual exploitation (7%). Of all these, only 2% cases were brought to Chadian Courts. One in five women in Chad is a victim of physical violence, and despite governmental prohibition, 35% of girls in Chad are married before the age of 15, while 44% undergo female genital mutilation. A specific concern involves second and third-generation Chadians from CAR, who have been recognized as de facto nationals by the government, but are still waiting for official recognition and still at risk of statelessness. To avoid this problem, in March 2015 the Government announced that it would provide birth certificates to every child born in a transit site. Among the most vulnerable populations, the returnees and refugees belonging to nomadic tribes from CAR have lost their cattle and are stigmatized for their ethnic origin and nomadic culture. Their presence, together with the closure of the CAR border, reignited farmer-herder clashes.



Darfurian refugees from Sudan in Treguine camp

Credit: CC BY-SA, UNHCR / F. Noy
Source: Flickr.com

Access

Chad's President ordered the closure of the southern border with CAR to all except Chadian citizens until the CAR crisis is resolved, and deployed additional security forces to the area due to concern that armed fighters might be infiltrating refugee populations. This resulted in severely restricted refugee movements and goods circulation. Along the border with Nigeria, although access restrictions seem to have been lifted, Chadian security forces are still screening road users and their property avigation on the rivers flowing along the border of Chad and Cameroon still remains restricted. Although in 2015 main aid agencies reported severe obstacles reaching people in need of food assistance, overall, humanitarian access has been reported as satisfactory for most humanitarian partners during the second quarter 2016. However, the recent resurgence in the use of mines in the Lac region could imply movement restrictions in some border areas, bearing consequences on the possibilities of return and durable solutions.

TRUTH SEEKING PROCESSES

Chad established a Truth Commission in 1990, the Commission of Inquiry into the Crimes and Misappropriations Committed by Ex-President Habré, His Accomplices and/or Accessories, which produced a report the following year. The Commission was responsible for investigating illegal detentions, assassinations, disappearances, torture, mistreatment, other attacks on the physical and mental integrity of persons; plus all violations of human rights, illicit narcotics trafficking and embezzlement of state funds between 1982 and 1990. In its findings, the Commission found Habré responsible for an estimated 40,000 deaths, identified the Directorate of Documentation and Security as particularly responsible for cruelty, contempt, and terrorizing the population, and described the involvement of foreign governments in funding and training the perpetrators. However, reception of this report has been lukewarm. Critics denounced the partiality and political motivation of the Commission, and notably the hidden intention to discredit the previous regime, and legitimize the incumbent one.

MEMORY

Among other recommendations, the Truth Commission invited the Government to honor the memory of the victims. To that end, and in order to educate Chadian society about the horrors of that regime, the Government was called to “construct a monument honoring the memory of the victims of Habré’s repression,” “designate a day for prayer and contemplation for said victims,” and “transform the former DDS headquarters and underground prison known as the ‘Piscine’ into a museum.” However, none of these recommendations has been implemented so far. In 2011, Chadian government held, however, a preliminary ceremony for the victims at Hamrol-Goz, Habré’s largest mass grave and the planned site of a victims’ memorial.



The National Centre of
Cultural Activity in Ndjamen
Credit: CC BY-SA 3.0,
Notrchad
Source: Wikipedia Commons

FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY AND REPARATION

In its recommendations, the 1990 Commission of Inquiry invited Chadian Government to accelerate the establishment of an independent judiciary, reform the security forces, and create a National Human Rights Commission and put in place prosecutions as well as symbolic reparations. In terms of judicial initiatives, Chad has not established any special courts to deal with war crimes and other abuses not stipulated in the Constitution, though the 1993 law provided for the creation of a special tribunal to judge Hissène Habré and his accomplices. However, in August 2008, former President Hissène Habré was convicted in absentia of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by a criminal court. After 14 years of trial, in March 2015, 20 former security agents were convicted of torture-related charges and ordered to pay reparations. Approximately 7,000 victims attending the trial in N'Djaména were granted a total of 75 billion CFA francs (about US\$125 million) to be paid by the defendants and Chadian government. A different option for justice has been created out of the country's borders. The Extraordinary African Chambers is a special unit within the Senegalese court system inaugurated by Senegal and the African Union in February 2013 to prosecute the "person or persons" most responsible for international crimes committed in Chad between 1982 and 1990. The case of Habré charged with crimes against humanity, torture and war crimes is opened by the Chambers. The first part of the trial is supposed to last until October 30. In case Habré is found guilty, there will be a second stage to look at the question of civil parties and reparations.

PEACEBUILDING

Ongoing efforts are being made to engage community leaders, stakeholders, and local decision makers in local collaborative dispute resolution mechanisms. These strategies include trainings, community forums, roundtables with local and customary authorities, and radio programs, all designed to promote durable conflict resolution mechanisms. According to Search for Common Ground, an NGO involved in developing similar activities in Logone Occidental province, past initiatives have shown that once trained in conflicts transformation techniques, representatives from farmer and pastoralist associations and other civil society organizations are better able to resolve and avert conflicts over natural resources, which lead to competition over natural resources, and ultimately violent conflicts.



A tribal delegation

Credit: CC BY 2.0, Mark Knobil
Source: Wikipedia Commons

“ TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AFTER THE END OF THE HABRÉ DICTATORSHIP, AND FOURTEEN YEARS AFTER THE SURVIVORS FILED THEIR COMPLAINTS, TODAY’S CONVICTIONS AND THE ORDER OF REPARATIONS ARE A STUNNING VICTORY FOR VICTIMS OF HISSÈNE HABRÉ. THE SENTENCING OF STATE OFFICIALS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CRIMES IS NOT ONLY A TESTAMENT TO THE COURAGE AND TENACITY OF THE VICTIMS, IT IS A REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT IN A COUNTRY WHERE IMPUNITY FOR PAST ATROCITIES HAS BEEN THE NORM.”

Human Rights Watch Counsel Reed Brody¹

¹Global Justice, Chad: Landmark trial sees reparations awarded to Habré regime victims, 6 April 2015, <https://ciccglobajustice.wordpress.com/2015/04/06/chad-landmark-trial-sees-reparations-awarded-to-habre-regime-victims/>



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