

CHAD: A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	I
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. A CRISIS OF THE STATE	2
A. 1990-2000: MISSED OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECONCILIATION.....	2
B. OIL, CLIENTELISM AND CORRUPTION.....	3
1. Clientelism and generalised corruption	3
2. The oil curse	4
C. MILITARISATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND POPULATION	5
D. NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVIDES	6
III. THE ACTORS IN THE CRISIS	8
A. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION	8
1. Repression and co-option	8
2. The political platform of 13 August 2007	10
B. THE ARMED REBELLION	11
1. The rebellion in Chad	12
2. The agreements between the government and the armed groups	13
3. The rebel attack against N’Djamena in February and its consequences.....	15
C. DEBY AND HIS ALLIES.....	16
1. Internal weakening	16
2. Bideyat and Kobé loyalties.....	17
3. French brothers in arms	17
D. AFTER FEBRUARY 2008.....	19
IV. HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES	22
A. THE REFUGEES IN DARFUR	22
B. INTER-COMMUNAL VIOLENCE AND THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED.....	24
V. REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS	25
A. SUDAN.....	25
1. Sudanese support for the Chad rebels.....	25
2. Deby and the Darfur rebels.....	26
3. The peace accords between Chad and Sudan	27
B. LIBYA	28
C. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC.....	30
D. AFRICAN UNION	31
VI. MINURCAT AND EUFOR – CHAD/CAR.....	32
A. MINIMUM SERVICE	32
B. THE NEED FOR A NEW MANDATE	33
VII. A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK	35
A. THE NEED FOR GENUINE POLITICAL PROCESS	35
B. A NEW NEGOTIATIONS ARCHITECTURE	36
VIII. CONCLUSION	37

IX. APPENDICES

A. MAP OF CHAD38

B. CHRONOLOGY39

C. KEY OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AND ACTORS40

D. THE MAIN REBEL GROUPS AND THEIR KEY ACTORS42

E. ACRONYMS.....44

CHAD: A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The political and security crisis Chad faces is internal, and has been exacerbated rather than caused by the meddling of its Sudanese neighbours. Power has been monopolised by a Zaghawa military clan with President Idriss Déby at the top since 1990, leading to increased violence in political and social relations, ethnic tensions and distribution of the spoils of government on the basis of clan favouritism. Neither return to a multi-party system in 1990, enhanced government revenues from newly exploited oil reserves since 2004, nor elections backed by Chad's Western allies have brought democracy or improved governance. The international community must press for an internal reconciliation process focused on reforming the Chadian state, particularly its administration and security sector, and ending the armed insurgency. At the same time, a regional process must be revived to address longstanding disputes between Chad and Sudan and eliminate the pattern of proxy war and support for each other's rebels.

These steps require a new approach toward national reconciliation. The political agreement signed in August 2007 between the government and the political opposition focused narrowly on electoral reforms and is incapable of providing the basis for the fundamental shifts of governance required. Major rebel attacks on N'Djamena just six months later showed that the agreement, signed without inclusive national consultations, cannot offer the way out of deep political crisis and end the armed rebellion. The single-minded emphasis on implementing that agreement by the European Union (EU), and France in particular, must be reconsidered. Chadians and the international community must understand that without a credible political negotiation leading to a process of administrative, economic and security sector reform, Chad will continue to be condemned to the permanent crises, alienation and recurring threats of power seizures through force that have haunted the country for decades.

Sudan's repeated attacks against refugee camps and Darfur rebels in Chad added a new and worrying dimension to the crisis. Déby found a new lease of life in

portraying himself as a key asset in the West's strategy of containment against the Khartoum regime. His decision to back Darfur's Sudanese rebels became a central element to his political survival strategy. It calmed the discontent of members of his Zaghawa clan, the Darfuri branch of which was harassed by Khartoum, and helped strengthen him militarily against his armed opponents, supported by the National Congress Party in Khartoum. Further, the 250,000 Darfur refugees living since 2004 in a dozen camps along the border have brought in major international humanitarian and security stabilisation efforts. The UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the European stabilisation mission (EUFOR) have been deployed to protect and police the refugee camps and secure their immediate environment.

To address the political and security crises within Chad and the regional instability, a three-track process of dialogue and substantive action is needed. A first track should build on the August 2007 agreement by launching new political negotiations with broadened participation, including civil society. These should produce a political accord to address national revenue sharing, decentralisation of state authority, security sector reform, judicial reforms to ensure accountability and combat human rights abuses and corruption, and restructuring of the state administration. A second negotiation track should focus on the armed rebellion and lead to a genuine, permanent ceasefire, the cantonment of rebel forces before their possible integration into the army and a joint verification mechanism. Rebel groups adhering to this process would have a right to participate in the first track. The same prominent African could facilitate both tracks under a UN mandate. A peacekeeping force – MINURCAT strengthened and with a new political mandate – should assist implementation of the agreements.

The third track should focus on the regional dimension of the conflict. On the basis of the Dakar agreement, a regional conflict resolution mechanism should be established by its facilitator, the Senegalese government, under supervision of the African Union (AU). It

should address and seek to eliminate the support provided by Sudan and Chad to armed groups in each other's country, improve security and protection for civilians along their common borders, attempt to halt arms trafficking and address the negative ramifications of these regional disputes for the Central African Republic (CAR). Neighbours of the three countries should act as guarantors of the signed provisions, and MINURCAT and the hybrid UN/AU operation in Darfur (UNAMID) should monitor violations on the borders and be part of a joint verification mechanism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of Chad:

1. Accept the nomination of a mediator, mandated by the United Nations, to lead on the two-track national process described above and in points 2 and 3 below.
2. Participate in a new political negotiation with the non-armed opposition, representatives of civil society, traditional chiefs and religious communities to broaden the agreement of 13 August 2007 to include talks on:
 - (a) reconciliation;
 - (b) equitable distribution of resources, especially oil;
 - (c) demilitarisation and functioning of the state administration;
 - (d) redrawing of administrative boundaries and decentralisation;
 - (e) security sector reform, including implementation of the recommendations of the army review;
 - (f) disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of rebel combatants;
 - (g) judicial independence, including the status of the Supreme Court; and
 - (h) negotiation of a social pact on access to land.
3. Participate in a new negotiation with the armed opposition on the basis of the Syrte agreement in order to obtain an enforceable ceasefire, which should:
 - (a) specify the positions of the armed groups and the Chadian army, assembly points in communities of origin and the cantonment of troops and combatants;
 - (b) create a joint military commission to monitor the agreements and discuss contentious issues; and

- (c) invite participating rebel groups to the national political negotiations.
4. Participate in a regional dialogue, under the auspices of the African Union, with the governments of Sudan, CAR and key regional powers to address:
 - (a) regional security and stability, including a cessation of support by Sudan and Chad for each other's armed rebellions; and
 - (b) regional consequences of the Chad-Sudan conflict in terms of population movements, reintegration of combatants, arms trafficking and cross-border pastoral migration.
5. Facilitate the deployment of the DIS (integrated security detachment) to address the security situation in refugee camps and sites for internally displaced persons (IDPs), in collaboration with MINURCAT.
6. Cease support to Sudanese armed groups in accordance with the Dakar agreement.

To the United Nations Security Council and Secretary-General:

7. Nominate a prominent African figure to serve as facilitator for the two-track national process in Chad.
8. Adapt the mandate of MINURCAT to:
 - (a) take over from EUFOR, reinforcing the mission with a more significant policing component to ensure improved protection of civilians;
 - (b) support the implementation of the results of the national negotiations proposed above; and
 - (c) monitor the implementation of the ceasefire and the cantonment of combatants, and coordinate a joint verification mechanism at the border.

To the Government of France:

9. Support this three-track process diplomatically and financially.
10. Halt all arms deliveries to the government of Chad and support international efforts to eliminate military support for Chadian rebels from the government of Sudan or elsewhere.
11. Refrain from pressing EUFOR to facilitate premature resettlement of displaced persons.

To the Government of Sudan:

12. Cease support to Chadian armed groups in accordance with the Dakar agreement.

13. Participate in a regional conflict resolution mechanism that involves all regional partners affected by the crisis.

To the Government of Libya:

14. Support this three-track process diplomatically and financially, and play an appropriate role in a regional conflict resolution mechanism.
15. Halt all arms deliveries to the government of Chad and support international efforts to eliminate military support for Chadian rebels from the government of Sudan or elsewhere.

To the European Union:

16. Support this three-track process diplomatically and financially, obtain a moratorium on arms deliveries to the government of Chad from member states and support efforts to eliminate military support for Chadian rebels from the government of Sudan or elsewhere.
17. Accelerate the implementation of development programs and engage more fully in efforts to reform and re-establish local and national authorities.

To MINURCAT:

18. Accelerate the deployment of police officers and training of the DIS (integrated security detachment) and display both the leadership and proactive operational engagement necessary to improve the protection of civilians in the refugee camps.
19. Create a UN coordination mechanism to improve operational coherence between the multiple peace-keeping forces in the region.

To EUFOR:

20. Increase patrols in the areas of return of displaced persons and refrain from premature resettlement of these individuals.

To the African Union:

21. Support the three-track process, and the establishment of a regional conflict resolution mechanism facilitated by the government of Senegal to resolve political and security problems between Chad and Sudan.

To the Government of Senegal:

22. Facilitate a regional conflict resolution mechanism, building on the Dakar agreement, to address key regional issues, as described above.

CHAD: A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

I. INTRODUCTION

The crisis in Chad is profound and enduring.¹ The conflict in eastern Chad and its connection with the instability in Darfur is only the most visible part of the crisis. The area's 185,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs)² and hundreds of massacred civilians make this one of the most serious conflicts that Chad has experienced since independence. However, the conflict in the east is only the catalyst for a much more profound crisis that has affected the country since the beginning of the 1960s. Chad is a country tormented by its history, and in urgent need of an overhaul of the state, a new system of governance and a new social contract between its peoples.

A rebellion led by Hissène Habré (1979-1982) overthrew the regime of President Malloum. Subsequently, 45,000 people were victims of political, ethnic and religious violence before Habré was in turn overthrown by Idriss Deby Itno in 1990. The victims are still waiting for justice. Since then the state has neither created a mechanism to establish the truth nor introduced a genuine policy of reconciliation.³ Deby's sei-

zure of power in 1990, initially perceived as a liberation, has resulted in no genuine change in governance in the country and was followed by a series of lost opportunities for reform and reconciliation.

Deby is running out of steam but is making the most of the conflict in Darfur to ensure the continuance of his regime and to gain international acceptance of his stifling of the opposition and the almost total absence of dialogue with the rebellion, cleverly stigmatised as an instrument of Sudan's Islamists. International acceptance by default of this strategy for political survival is harmful for the country's future. Resolution of the regional crisis as well as the establishment of a credible internal political process are both indispensable for a lasting settlement in Chad.

In addition to the consequences of the Darfur crisis in Chad, this Crisis Group report examines the internal dynamics of the conflict that has affected the country for the last two decades and analyses the strategies of the actors in the recent changes in the balance of forces. It proposes *in fine* a new framework for the resolution of the conflict, one that considers both its regional and national dimensions.

¹For more on Chad's recent history, especially the re-election of Idriss Deby in 2006, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°111, *Chad: Back towards War?*, 1 June 2006. Robert Buijtenhuijs, "Chad in the age of the warlords", in David Birmingham and Phillis M. Martin (eds.), *History of Central Africa. The contemporary years since 1960* (London/New York, 1998), pp. 21-42.

²According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates, on 28 August 2008, there were around 185,000 internally displaced people in eastern Chad. "Humanitarian action in Chad: Facts and figures snapshot report", OCHA, 28 August 2008.

³Despite repeated commitments by Senegal and the African Union (AU) to organise a fair trial, the trial of Hissène Habré has still not begun. Mandated by the AU in July 2006 to organise this trial, Senegal is regularly criticised by human rights organisations for being so slow in dealing with the case. The Senegalese authorities say they are still waiting for the international community's help in organising the trial. Meanwhile, the Chad judiciary has condemned the former president to death in his absence for his alleged support of the attempted overthrow of President Deby in February 2008.

However, N'Djamena has not yet issued warrants for the arrest of those convicted in their absence, which appears to indicate that it is not really interested in seeing the sentences carried out but wants only to convey a message to the rebels, whose co-option is still possible. Cf. Moumine Ngarmbassa, "Hissène Habré condamné à mort par contumace", RMC.fr, 15 August 2008. See "Chad: the victims of Hissène Habré still waiting for justice", Human Rights Watch, July 2005.

II. A CRISIS OF THE STATE

Analysis of the current crisis requires returning to 1979, a key date in Chad's modern history. That year was not only marked by the end of the 'southern' President Malloum's regime and his replacement with northerners, but also by a profound break within the country and within individual consciences.⁴ The conquest of power by the northern elite in 1979 ushered in a bloody phase of the Chad crisis. None of the politicians that have come to power since then have ever seriously tried to come to grips with the root causes of the conflict and its manifestations in daily life. The policies implemented by successive governments since 1979 have only served to deepen this gap. By favouring the use of violence, making promotions along tribal lines, conducting the misunderstood "arabisation" of education and strengthening presidential authoritarianism, the politicians in power have perpetuated a system of oppression similar to the one they denounced and have accentuated the divide between the country's communities.

A. 1990-2000: MISSED OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECONCILIATION

The current regime bears a lot of the responsibility for the deterioration of the situation in the country, notably the unravelling of the national fabric, the decay of the state apparatus and public services and the disappearance of the very concept of a national army. Although it benefited from a long period of relative stability (1990-2002), continuous external support (from France, the U.S., Libya and Sudan until 2003) and a significant increase in financial resources, especially since the start of oil production in 2004, President Deby and his many governments have been incapable of uniting the people of Chad or reforming political and social institutions and rebuilding the nation. Despite the creation of a commission to investigate the crimes committed during the government of Hissène

⁴ After a conference on "The North-South Conflict, Myth or Reality", organised by the Al-Mouna cultural centre in May 1995, in N'Djamena, intellectuals and politicians highlighted the importance of events in 1979 for the disintegration of the national identity and the increasing misunderstanding between communities, especially between "the people of the south and their Muslim compatriots". The study and even the mention of the issue became taboo during the dictatorship and it was not until after the overthrow of Hissène Habré in 1990 and the organisation of the National Sovereign Conference in 1993 that the North-South conflict once again became the subject of seminars and analysis.

Habré, the former dictator's accomplices have never been pursued and most of them have been reintegrated into the new regime's security apparatus.

The new president's first ten years in power were years of lost opportunities. In 1990, he benefited from a honeymoon period that would have allowed him to begin a policy of reconciliation. However, the assassination of Joseph Behidi, a lawyer and vice-president of the Chad Human Rights League (LTDH) in N'Djamena⁵ on 16 February 1992 and the massacres in Doba⁶ in August of the same year prevented that happening.⁷ The National Sovereign Conference (CNS), held between January and April 1993, set itself the task of rebuilding the Chadian state, especially through a thorough reform of the army, the public administration and schools and the organisation of free elections. However, the excessive influence of the president in the management of the transition, the constant changes of prime ministers and the pre-electoral manoeuvres overshadowed the CNS's priority objectives, the main protagonists of which hastily rallied to the side of the victor of the presidential elections.

The 1996-1997 elections also presented an opportunity for a fresh start and a genuine legitimisation of institutions and government. Unfortunately, the growing disinterest of the electorate over the course of the three polls (referendum, presidential and legislative elections); the intense and too visible involvement of France in the financing, organisation and logistics of

⁵ The murder of this prominent figure, well-known for his straight talking, was a real turning point in the country's political life. His body was found in the early hours of 16 February 1992. He had been shot in the head twice. His car, which was stolen by his killer(s) was allegedly seen at the presidency. His funeral was attended by massive crowds, especially from the N'Djamena neighbourhoods inhabited by "southerners". The investigation promised by the government made no progress in solving the crime. Neither the killer nor mastermind was identified. The LTDH claimed the killer was a member of the presidential guard. The regime blamed the period's insecure climate for the murder.

⁶ In 1991, after an abortive coup, Kette Nodji Moïse, an officer from the south, led a rebellion in Eastern Logone prefecture. This rebellion's modus operandi consisted of occupying the rural areas around Doba (regional capital of Eastern Logone) in order to harass government forces. The repression of this insurrection by the Chad army was accompanied by atrocities against the civilian population, which was accused of passing information to the rebels. According to the LTDH, dozens of people were kidnapped and summarily executed in Doba during August 1992. In response to the outcry provoked by this incident, the then Chad interior minister, Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane (now a rebel), said it was only a "blunder", which earned him the name of Mr Blunder from the local press.

⁷ See section III for more details.

the elections; and the unequal resources available to opposition parties and the presidential party (Patriotic Salvation Movement - MPS) made the elections seem at worst “controlled”⁸ and, at best, to be the final episode of the transition ensuring the legitimacy of the president. These elections were never a moment for expression of the democratic will and popular mobilisation. The situation was in fact made considerably worse after President Deby’s decision to change the constitution in 2005 in order to allow himself a third term in office.⁹ Having then lost all illusions, the political opposition boycotted the referendum organised to legitimise the change in the constitution and the subsequent presidential election in May 2006.¹⁰

B. OIL, CLIENTELISM AND CORRUPTION

The crisis of the state in Chad was especially acute. Half a century after independence, many communities across the country still violently refuse to accept the state’s authority and see its administration as foreign.¹¹ Prone to authoritarianism, the state has become a repressive apparatus in the hands of a clan that sees it as a “source of wealth without a master”.¹² Idriss Deby’s accession to the presidency, his re-elections and the adoption of a multi-party system only changed the clan that benefited from the spoils of state. Since 2004, faced with many problems and anxious to perpetuate his power and ensure his re-election – forbidden by the Constitution at that time – President Deby has been constrained to increase the clientelistic character of his regime,¹³ contributing further to the deterioration of the structures and image of the Chad state.

⁸ See Antoine Bangui-Rombaye, *Tchad: Elections sous contrôle (1996-1997)* (Paris, 1999).

⁹ On 23 May 2004, the Chad National Assembly, in which Deby’s supporters had a majority, adopted a law allowing the president to stand for a third term in office. A referendum, held on 6 June 2005, voted for the proposed change in the Constitution. Deby was re-elected at the subsequent presidential election on 3 May 2006.

¹⁰ “3 May, deuil électoral”, *N’Djamena Bi-Hebdo*, N°946, 1 May 2006; “Pas d’élection le 3 May 2006”, *N’Djamena Bi-Hebdo*, N°938, 30 March 2006; “Déclaration du commissaire Louis Michel sur l’élection présidentielle au Tchad”, 16 May 2006, <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/644&format=HTML&aged=1&language=FR&guiLanguage=en>.

¹¹ Crisis Group interviews, N’Djamena, August 2007, March and April 2008.

¹² Thierry Michalon, “Les vrais blocages de l’Afrique”, unpublished article, September 2001.

¹³ Roland Marchal, “The unseen regional implications of the crisis in Darfur”, Alex de Waal (ed.), *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), pp. 185-186.

1. Clientelism and generalised corruption

To achieve this objective, the central and local services of the state and its agencies (including public sector companies like Cotontchad, the Chad Electricity Company (STEE), the National Road Maintenance Company (SNER), etc.) were used to distribute jobs, privileges and sinecures. This system, which benefits those close to the president, the members of his family and ethnic group, the Zaghawa, has contributed to Chad being classified as among the five most corrupt countries in the world in recent years.¹⁴ The SNER is one of the preferred instruments for channelling and using oil revenues allocated to the infrastructure sector, and has been managed by the president’s brother, Daoussa Deby, for many years. The STEE has twice invested, with the Chad state acting as guarantor, in a high-capacity generator intended to increase electricity production capacity for N’Djamena. On both occasions, the investment has been a technical and financial disaster and has worsened the capital’s electricity supply situation. Yet no sanctions have been imposed.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Cotontchad was a privileged target for French development aid and received an average of ten million francs per year in direct budgetary aid for more than ten years. Despite its advanced state of decay, it remains a focus for significant financial flows and is therefore still coveted by those close to power. Its current director general, Jonas Taïgue, is certainly of a new generation. However, two weeks after a cabinet reshuffle saw the appointment of an opponent, Mbailaou Naimbaye Lossimian, as head of the agriculture ministry, which has a statutory duty of care for the company, the presidency issued a decree transferring this statutory duty to the ministry of trade, industry and crafts led by Mahamat Abdoulaye Mahamat, a Deby ally. The interest in this enterprise, which is still crucial for the economic survival of hundreds of thousands of farmers in the south of the country, is such that the plan to privatise it has been frozen since 2004.¹⁵

¹⁴ Transparency International classified Chad as among the most corrupt countries in the world during the last three years: 145th out of 149 in 2004, 162nd out of 162 in 2005 and 160th out of 166 in 2006. In 2007, Chad was 172nd out of 179 countries. “Persistent corruption in low-income countries requires global action”, Transparency International, 26 September 2007.

¹⁵ In 2004, one of the country’s most brilliant technocrats and a former prime minister, Nagoum Yamassoum, was given responsibility for this program. It is not impossible that the plan to privatise the company will be abandoned so that it could continue to attract public money that could be siphoned off by the predators, who, in private, do not attempt to hide

Finally, the customs services are the preserve of the Zaghawa. All the major trade activities in the hands of northern businessmen (fuel supplies, livestock, cars and car parts, transport) cannot operate or be profitable unless they enjoy the protection of the customs services. This system feeds a vast clientelist network and is responsible for considerable financial losses. The government and its international partners have never conducted a genuine evaluation of these losses or taken any serious steps to correct them. When all is said and done, the Chad state seems to be a piece of real estate that the strongest “can legitimately take possession of as long as they conduct a certain level of redistribution to the members of their ethnic group”.¹⁶

2. The oil curse

At the end of the 1990s, Chad’s accession to the club of oil-producing countries awakened great hopes for change and development. Construction of the Doba-Kribi pipeline was then the biggest land-based investment in Africa. The agreement signed with the World Bank and an oil consortium formed by Exxon Mobil,¹⁷ Chevron and Petronas gave the Chad state the role of arbitration, redistribution and solidarity that could have allowed it to restore its image and improve public services. Unfortunately, a challenge by the president and his clan to the initial oil resources management model and their control of oil money have aggravated the crisis of confidence in the state.

The adoption of Law n°1 of 11 January 1999 on oil revenue,¹⁸ which identified its financial resources, obliged the government to include this revenue in the state budget. This law stipulated that 80 per cent of oil royalties should be spent on poverty reduction programs and 5 per cent should go directly to the producing regions. It also provided for the establishment of a savings fund for future generations (FGF). The law was welcomed by Chadians and the international community as a major advance that could serve as a model for other producer countries in Africa and the rest of the world. An oil resources management and

their lack of interest in the “colonial income” of cotton. They think it has received far too much state budgetary aid to the detriment of livestock. Rather than being punished for the inefficient management of Cotontchad, successive director-generals have been appointed to important government posts after leaving the company. For example, Haroun Kabadi and his successor at Cotonchad, Moussa Faki, were both appointed prime minister, in 2002 and 2003 respectively.

¹⁶Thierry Michalon, *op. cit.*

¹⁷Chad Esso Exploration and Production, a subsidiary of Exxon Mobil, is project operator.

¹⁸Crisis Group interview with members of civil society, N’Djamena, August 2007.

monitoring college, with representatives from parliament, and two from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade unions, was created in accordance with Chapter 4 of the same law.¹⁹ This step and the law itself gave the impression there was a real will to properly manage the financial flows from oil and the public expenditure that oil revenue would make possible.

This mechanism was supported by international financial institutions, notably the World Bank, which financed the Chad and Cameroon governments’ contributions to the construction of the pipeline (around 90 million out of a total of 3.5 billion), which allowed Chad to receive 400 million in other loans that depended on the World Bank loan.²⁰ In addition, although the World Bank itself invested relatively little in the project, its investment was perceived as an important validation of the project’s social and environmental aspects. Nine years after the promulgation of this law and five years after the first revenues were generated, the evaluation is damning.²¹ Today, less than 1,000 Chad citizens work in the oil sector and practically all of them occupy subordinate positions. In addition, the producer regions have not benefited from any of the promised advantages. There is still no tarmac road between Doba and Moundou and the 5 per cent of royalties that Law n° 1 allocated to the decentralised administrations are in fact directly managed by prefects and central government. There is no consultation with civil society organisations and no control by local authorities, which have still not been elected.

A recent World Bank document showed that only seven projects, worth a total of \$1.25 million, have been completed in Doba and Bebedja.²² All these pro-

¹⁹The composition of the Oil Resources Management and Monitoring College (CCSRP) is set out in article 16 of Law 001/PR/99 of 11 January 1999, as amended by Law 016/PR/2000 of 18 August 2000. The college included: a judge, a deputy, a senator, two senior officials appointed by the government, two representatives of civil society and a representative of religious denominations. With the exception of the senior officials, all the other CCSRP members were chosen by their peers. In 2007, the Chad government obtained the replacement of Dobian Assingar, a civil society representative. Apparently, the government did not want this former LTDH president on the CCSRP.

²⁰Chad was the first country to receive a conditional loan from the World Bank involving restrictions on the use of oil revenue. Investment by the oil companies accounted for most of project funds.

²¹Stephen Reyna, “Muddles in the ‘Model’ model: Oil, Conflict and the World Bank in Chad”, presented to the Annual Congress of the African Studies Association, New York, October 2007.

²²“Comité 5%: L’espoir renaît dans la Région Productrice de Pétrole”, World Bank, 27 February 2007, <http://go.worldbank.org/VXSEFQ3130>.

jects were in urban areas and half of the total investment from these projects was on the construction of a stadium in Doba, which no representative of civil society had requested. Charitable organisations, especially those from the Catholic Church are categorical: “the oil has brought more misery to the south, more AIDS, more alcoholism and more family problems”.²³ In the rest of the country, there is no major construction project or program financed by oil revenue. In N’Djamena, the vast property operation underway in the sector known as the “patte d’oie” that should benefit from oil revenues, has begun amid great confusion. This has led to fears of a vast speculative deviation, while much of the capital remains without electricity.

The dispute between the government and the World Bank at the end of 2005 led to the adoption of a new law²⁴ that resulted in the de facto elimination of the FGF and a redefinition of priority sectors, which is now left to the government’s discretion as it will be implemented by decree. This outcome, obtained with the support of parliamentarians and without any serious reaction from the political opposition and civil society, testifies to the failure of the system and of “control mechanisms” of the Chadian state, whose institutions yielded, one after the other, to the interests of the clan in power. Neither the presence of elected institutions and a multi-party system nor the existence of a certain level of political and press freedom was able to guarantee the democratic functioning of the state. The international community, especially France and the U.S., and its financial institutions, made no attempt to maintain a transparent management system of the oil windfall.

The role played by the World Bank in this failure does not reflect well on the institution or its managers and staff. In July 2006, after some months of resistance, the bank confirmed an inversion in the priority sectors and accepted that 80 per cent of oil revenues should henceforth be spent on “administration and security” after President Deby threatened to halt oil exports. Strengthened by China’s arrival in the Chad oil sector, Deby won his arm-wrestling contest²⁵ and the World Bank was only able to obtain from him a memorandum of agreement on the management of

future oil revenues.²⁶ The World Bank concluded that the project’s original development and poverty reduction aims were not going to be achieved and withdrew its support. Consequently, after discussions with the World Bank, the Chad government agreed to pay the bank in advance its part of the funding on 25 August 2008. The advance payment was made on 8 September 2008 and the World Bank is no longer involved in the project.²⁷

According to figures published by Chad Esso Exploration and Production, Chad received a total of \$1,244 million in the twelve months to the end of the first half of 2008, including \$410 million in royalties, \$811 million in taxes on profits and the rest in taxes and other charges. Chad’s accumulated total oil revenue from the beginning of the project until the end of the first half of 2008 was \$3,253 million.²⁸ Current gross oil production levels are around 131,000 barrels per day.²⁹

C. MILITARISATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND POPULATION

Reform of the army is indispensable for rebuilding the nation. Its oppressive presence, often uncontrolled and menacing, has made it, in the eyes of the population, an alien institution that is best avoided and from which no service or protection can be expected.³⁰ Its disorganised and dilapidated state is accompanied by a trend towards the militarisation of society, especially in the north and east, which could, in the long run, increase the risks of a violent explosion of the country. Despite some attempts at reform, immediately after it came to power and then the reorganisation of the senior command structure in April 2005, the new government does not seem to be able to deal with the problem, which is getting worse with the passage of time.

When he took power in 1990, Idriss Deby was considered, particularly in French military circles, to be a skilful and courageous military leader, but lacking in experience and political sensibility. It seems that after seventeen years in power, he has developed his politi-

²³ Crisis Group interview, Bebedja, August 2007. According to IRIN, the prevalence of AIDS in the oil production areas increased from 1.6 per cent at the end of the 1990s to 3.5 per cent in 2005 and 4.8 per cent in 2007. “Chad: AIDS Funding flows again”, IRIN, 16 August 2007. Also see “Chad: Weapons instead of ARVs”, IRIN, 30 June 2008.

²⁴ Law n° 2 of 11 January 2006.

²⁵ See Crisis Group Asia Report N°153, *China’s Thirst for Oil*, 9 June 2008.

²⁶ “Chad: Deby supreme for now”, *Africa Confidential*, vol. 47, no. 19, 22 September 2006.

²⁷ “Déclaration de la Banque mondiale au sujet de l’oléoduc Tchad-Cameroun”, press release, 2009/073/AFR, 9 September 2008.

²⁸ Esso Exploration and Production Chad Inc., www.esso.com/Chad-English/PA/Files/24_ch13.pdf.

²⁹ Ibid, www.esso.com/Chad-English/PA/Files/24_ch02.pdf.

³⁰ Crisis Group interviews, Abéché and Goz Beida, March 2007.

cal capacities and become a skilful politician and an inspired military leader during combat, even though he is still a commander-in-chief who is largely incapable of creating a national army. When he came to power, the army no longer resembled a national institution. It had been broken up during the events of 1979 and divided along regional and religious lines until 1982.

Despite a vast inventory, demobilisation and training operation launched in 1993 with major financial and technical support from France, which allegedly ended in the return of around 13,000 mainly “southerners” who were anxious to return home, it is impossible to give a precise figure for the numbers of the Chad army today. Estimates vary widely (between 30,000 and 60,000), although military experts feel the higher figure is more accurate. This would make the Chad army among the biggest in Africa, comparable to those of Nigeria (76,000) and South Africa (63,000).³¹

The dividing line between the National Chad Army (ANT), the Chad National and Nomadic Guard (GNNT), the Presidential Guard (GP) and the gendarmerie is blurred and the exact number of senior officers unknown. The army’s review (“états généraux de l’armée”), organised in 2005, has not been able to clarify these figures and has only been able to confirm the state of generalised disorganisation and confusion. However, thanks to oil money, the Chad Armed Forces have an impressive arsenal at their disposal.³² The number of police and gendarmerie officers is estimated at 10,000 (5,000 each), even though they are incapable of doing their job.³³ After the atrocities in refugee camps and sites for IDPs since 2005 and before the arrival of MINURCAT, whose remit includes training officers for these sites and camps, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had to take the initiative of funding some gendarmes in order to reestablish a minimum of security.

The Chad army seems to be an uncontrolled and omnipresent force in towns and neighbourhoods, especially in N’Djamena, and it is no longer easy to distinguish either the ranks or the forces. It seems to grow as successive groups of rebels are incorporated in accordance with the changing strategies of their chiefs, without any planning by the chiefs of staff, or

any genuine integrated command structure. The allocation of rank is carried out in complete obscurity and without the application of any objective criteria. Its reputation as a courageous and effective army, gained after its victories over the Libyan army in the early 1980s, has gradually deteriorated following failures in the Congo and atrocities against civilian populations in the Central African Republic³⁴ and Chad.

In addition, the multiplication of armed groups, Chadians or foreigners, government supporters or rebels, makes the country seem as though it is completely militarised. It has become normal for civilians to arm themselves, including in the capital, where weapons circulate almost freely. In northern Chad, in the regions of Bet and Wadi Fira, “everyone is a soldier” and can mobilise immediately in response to commands from their chiefs or officers, who are not necessarily part of the official chain of command.³⁵ The new regional governors are de facto leaders of small armies that they use for their own protection and to coerce the population.

The conflicts between farmers and herders have taken on a military dimension, sometimes because their protagonists are now armed, but also because the resolution of these conflicts today essentially concerns army chiefs. The involvement of the latter in this type of conflict exacerbates ethnic differences and accentuates the North-South divide. Clashes in the Goz Beida region at the beginning of 2007 between Chadian Arab populations, supposedly supporting Sudanese incursions, and militia from the Dadjo ethnic group, which has been encouraged by the government to take up arms, resulted in the departure of several thousand Chadian Arabs to Sudan. They have also organised their own self-defence and carried out reprisals that are potentially very destructive.³⁶

D. NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVIDES

Analysis of the crisis highlights the permanence of opposing interests and visions between those, essentially from northern and eastern Chad, who aspire to develop a culture and society based on Islam and

³¹The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) gives the official figure of 30,000. See “The Military Balance”, IISS, 5 February 2008.

³²“Sarkozy-Deby, qui tient qui?”, *La Lettre du continent*, 8 November 2007.

³³“Report of the Secretary-General on Chad and the Central African Republic pursuant to paragraphs 9 (d) and 13 of Security Council resolution 1706 (2006)”, 22 December 2006.

³⁴“République Centrafricaine: L’armée tchadienne attaque et incendie des villages frontaliers”, Human Rights Watch, 19 March 2008, <http://hrw.org/french/docs/2008/03/19/carepu18324.htm>.

³⁵Crisis Group interview with a government official, N’Djamena, August 2007.

³⁶Paul-Simon Handy, “Chad: wading through a domestic political crisis in a turbulent region”, “Situation Report”, Institute for Security Studies, 5 December 2007.

those, mainly from the west of Chari, who want a Christian-Western model, which they believe is the only way of integrating the country into a globalised world. Even though these “visions” are only those of a small elite, they often explain the decisions taken by political, rebel and religious leaders. The North-South divide is enduring and holds back the stabilisation and democratisation of the country.³⁷

The Chadian state came into being in 1960 as a “state without a nation” that would only be able to develop through new institutions and a certain level of consensus among extremely diverse communities. This diversity is particularly marked by religion, as in other countries in this part of the Sahel belt (Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan). This belt draws a dividing line (permeable and changing, but perfectly evident) between two areas in which the gradual establishment and affirmation of the Muslim and Christian faiths have created profound social and cultural differences. The tribal and repressive policy of successive regimes in N’Djamena and the wars that have punctuated the existence of the young Chadian state have unfortunately contributed to transforming what were only differences into, at first, a profound lack of understanding, and later a real obstacle to national cohesion.

The dictatorship of Hissène Habré accentuated the North-South divide considerably.³⁸ His repression also contributed to reigniting old antagonisms and even in creating new ones. The militarisation of regional administration and the generalised promotion of soldiers and other northerners to positions of responsibility in the state apparatus, army and public sector companies strengthened, particularly in the south, perceptions of a northern power playing the tribal and religious cards and seeking to impose itself as the defender of Muslims against Sara Christians.

The arrival in power of Idriss Deby was seen by southerners as representing continuity with the preceding

regime. The first waves of repression inflicted by the new regime (1990-1992), the domination of political life and elections by the MPS, the recycling of personnel from the former documentation and security department into the new national security agency, the use of southern politicians as token figures in the many governments (including as prime minister) that succeeded each other after 1990, the reduction in the role and number of southern managers in ministries and public sector companies³⁹ were all indications that the government did not want southerners to play a significant role in the new institutions.

The arrival of the new government in 1990 also coincided with a trend towards the radicalisation of Chadian Islam. The prolonged stay in Sudan of some MPS leaders, the association with an Islam impregnated with Turabist ideology and the political links nurtured with the government in Khartoum seem to have initially encouraged the initiatives of Islamic leaders, who installed a “Sudanese” imam in the great mosque of N’Djamena. They encouraged a policy of territorial conquest consisting of the systematic purchase of land for the construction of mosques throughout the country, including in the south. They also tried to impose stricter social rules on Muslims, especially on women, who were invited to wear the veil. This voluntarist and openly proselytising policy clashed with the line maintained by the dignitaries of the traditionally more liberal and tolerant Chad Islamic brotherhood.⁴⁰

³⁷ See Robert Buijtenhuijs, “Chad in the age of the warlords”, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

³⁸ Punitive operations against the south took place in September 1984. Idriss Deby was army chief of staff and President Habré’s special security advisor when these events unfolded. Often called “black September” in southern Chad, these operations traumatised the population in the south and contributed to the lasting feeling that the army was mainly an instrument of repression and was to be carefully avoided. Questioned on several occasions about his role in these events, Idriss Deby has always denied any responsibility and claimed that he was only doing his duty as a soldier to end the civil war and that he was not aware of the massacres carried out by the DDS, the army’s independent repressive force that answered directly to President Hissène Habré.

³⁹ Southern managers self-derisively call themselves “Laoukoura”, which means “a southerner who does the work of an intellectually incapable northerner”. See Lyadish Ahmed, “Cachez ces Sudistes...”, article published on the website ialtchad.com.

⁴⁰ The proportion of Muslims in the Chad population is estimated at a little more than half of the total population (54 per cent). The Islam practised in Chad, especially in rural areas, is impregnated with the doctrines of the Tidjaniya, a Muslim brotherhood that is very widespread in black Africa (Senegal, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania), etc. The Tidjaniya was created in 1871 by Sheikh Abou el Abass Tijani. Mixing study of the Koran with the divination practises of the marabouts, followers wear amulets to protect themselves against evil spirits, etc. The most important aim of the Tidjaniya is to adapt Islam to African traditions. It is precisely these practices of divination that are held against them by the Wahhabists, who judge them to be impious. In general, in rural areas, Muslims have little time for such remarks and continue to ostentatiously wear their amulets and visit the village marabout in case of illness, bereavement, etc. For more on the relations between the Tidjaniya and Wahhabists in Chad, see Henri Coudray, “Chrétiens et musulmans au Tchad” in *Islamochristiana* (Rome, 1996).

This proselytising policy consists of increasing Islam's influence by targeting opinion leaders⁴¹ and increasing charitable initiatives towards the population.⁴² The exodus of communities recently converted to Islam⁴³ towards N'Djamena, the population of which increased sixfold in 30 years, also had a major influence on the relations between communities. Since he came to power, Idriss Deby has closed his eyes to this gradual islamisation of society. He adopted a lax attitude in response to the deviations of the Wahhabist imams in the south of the country, while avoiding any overt attacks on Christian clergy. He does not hesitate to sometimes consult the archbishop of N'Djamena or even to attend mass at N'Djamena cathedral. This attitude is not bereft of political calculations and electoralist manoeuvres, but it helps avoid a complete break between the government and the Catholic hierarchy.

Relations between Deby and Muslims have not always been without friction. The leaders of the Fayçal Mosque in N'Djamena, the biggest in the country, have sometimes openly criticised Deby of trying to appoint imams who support him to the position of head of this mosque. More generally, the president gives the impression of letting the expansion of Islam take its course, while taking measures to brake its progress if he feels it is able to harm his grip on power.⁴⁴ He occasionally publicly reaffirms his support for the secular state and denounces the radical Islamism presented as another expression of Sudan's policy of destabilising Chad and the sub-region.

⁴¹ As in the case of certain canton and village chiefs in the south who are offered to visit Mecca and receive financial support on their return.

⁴² Vaccination campaigns, installation of health centres, support for the most vulnerable, help for disaster victims, etc.

⁴³ The Hadjarai and Dadjo in Guera, the Tama in Ouaddaï, Zaghawa in Biltine and Gorane in BET.

⁴⁴ Although it forms part of his strategy to hold on to power, this policy of not paying much attention to the expansion of Islam is not without danger. Recent events in Kouno in July 2008 illustrate the risks of such a policy. On 5 July, a fundamentalist imam at the head of 400 men armed with guns, cudgels and knives declared a holy war against the Christians of Kouno (extreme south of Chad). His crusade only lasted a few hours but, in that time, he burned down Christian churches and homes. The Chad army massacred 80 of the imam's followers while he himself was arrested and taken to N'Djamena.

III. THE ACTORS IN THE CRISIS

There are three main types of actors in the internal crisis that is currently affecting Chad. First, a presidential clan determined to use any means to hang on to power. Second, a civilian opposition that is calling for greater political space in which to express itself. Third, armed rebels who believe that the only way to obtain a change of government is through armed struggle. The dividing line between these three camps is not fixed and the same actors move from one camp to another and radically change their discourse depending on their own personal strategies and circumstances.

The rebel attack on N'Djamena in February 2008 was undoubtedly a major event in the evolution of the Chad crisis. For the first time, a foreign rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), took the fight to the streets of the Chadian capital. The February 2008 attack also showed that the Chadian regime is vulnerable even though it is excessively armed.

A. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION⁴⁵

In response to Deby's decision to amend the constitution in order to retain power, the political opposition formed a Coordination for the Defence of the Constitution (CPDC) in 2002 and called for a boycott of all electoral consultations organised by the regime. This led to an internal political impasse. Having failed to achieve a dialogue involving the three actors in the conflict (the presidential camp would not accept rebel participation), the CPDC decided to negotiate alone with the government and these negotiations led to the formation of the political platform of 13 August 2007.

1. Repression and co-option

Banned or in exile throughout Hissène Habré's bloody reign, Chad's opposition parties reappeared in 1990 when Habré fell from power. "I bring you neither gold nor money, but freedom" were the important words in Deby's first speech after his victorious entry into N'Djamena.⁴⁶ This gave the starting signal for the opening of political space. After the adoption of the first laws authorising political parties,⁴⁷ a dozen par-

⁴⁵ See Appendix C for a detailed presentation of the main opposition parties and actors.

⁴⁶ Extract from Colonel Deby's first speech, on 3 December 1990, after his victorious entrance to N'Djamena.

⁴⁷ Regulation n°015/PR/91 of 4 October 1991 set out the conditions for the creation, operation and dissolution of political parties. The first political parties to appear were: Fed-

ties were formed, creating the impression of democratic renewal. Unfortunately, it was not long before disenchantment set in.

Until the National Sovereign Conference, Deby left the opposition press and political parties a significant degree of freedom of expression. However, the deterioration in the security situation at the beginning of the 1990s very quickly reduced the margin of manoeuvre for opposition party leaders, who rightly feared for their own safety. In addition to this menacing environment, the ethnic and faith basis on which political parties were formed contributed to reducing their credibility. Very few parties⁴⁸ were capable of mobilising anyone outside their ethnic and/or territorial base.⁴⁹ The opposition was therefore only able to constitute an electoral counterbalance to the government by creating an alliance to avoid fragmenting the electorate. However, the new regime quickly understood it was in its interests to divide the opposition by funding the creation of many small political parties that officially claimed to be in opposition but were really controlled by the government.⁵⁰

The various electoral consultations that followed the CNS did not allow a real assessment to be made of the relative weight of the opposition parties in relation to the MPS. There was clearly electoral fraud, and the

eration Action for the Republic (FAR), led by Yorongar; Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP) led by Lol Mahamat Choua; National Union for Democracy and Renewal (UNDR), led by Kamougué; l'Union nationale (UN), led by Abdoulaye Lamana; Union for Democracy and Republic (UDR), led by Jean Bawoyeu Alingué; Union for Renewal and Democracy (URD), led by Saleh Kebzabo.

⁴⁸ With the exception of the MPS, which benefits from state resources, and can therefore claim national representativity, all the other political parties have a very small following. Although some parties, such as the FAR, the RDP and the UNDR are fairly well known throughout the country because of the popularity of their leaders, their electorate is probably restricted to the region of the origin, or even the ethnic group of their founders. On the representativity of Chad political parties, see the work of Robert Buijthenhuijs, particularly *Transitions et élections au Tchad 1993-1997. Restauration autoritaire et recomposition politique* (Paris, 1998).

⁴⁹ Paul-Simon Handy, op. cit.

⁵⁰ As Robert Buijthenhuijs remarked in, *La Conférence nationale souveraine du Tchad. Un essai d'histoire immédiate* (Paris, 1995), although most political parties represented at the CNS publicly claimed to be in opposition, secret ballots showed the opposition had a very small majority of only two or three. This indicated that many political parties supported the government. Moreover, the ease with which Fidèle Mounkar, the prime minister during the transition, was so quickly removed, shows that the MPS had many allies in the transition parliament.

imbalance of resources during the electoral campaigns made it a very unequal struggle.⁵¹ In response to this situation, opposition leaders and activists became discouraged. The 2001 presidential election witnessed the last genuine mobilisation of the opposition. Since then, the main political parties have used systematic boycott as their only means to contest power. In the absence of an updated electoral roll and considering the government's influence over the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI)⁵², they feel their participation would only serve to legitimise elections of dubious fairness.

Eighteen years after the introduction of a multi-party system, opposition parties are not perceived as structures likely to bring change. Weakened by the regime's co-optation attempts, deprived of the resources to organise⁵³ and faced with the weariness of their activists, the main opposition leaders have often accepted posts in the government. Most opposition leaders signed an agreement with the government on 13 August 2007 and have since made alliances or co-operated with the MPS.⁵⁴ This participation in the government has allowed opposition leaders to benefit from state resources and find jobs in the administration for party members, giving them the opportunity to develop their own clientelistic networks, even though this has further reduced their credibility in the eyes of the population. Those who remain in opposition in the National Assembly are in a minority and all their appeals for the annulment of election results have been systematically rejected. In these conditions, apart from

⁵¹ In *Transition et élections au Tchad*, op. cit., Buijthenhuijs describes how MPS meetings during the first election campaign in 1996 turned into shows of force against the opposition, which lacked resources. Despite this situation, it seems that Idriss Deby's victory was far from being indisputable and owed much to the pressures exercised by the government and the French ambassador.

⁵² Updating of the electoral roll and reform of the CENI, in accordance with the 13 August 2007 agreement.

⁵³ Since 1998, the government has taken several opposition newspapers to court. Journalists at the *N'Djamena Hebdo*, the *Temps* and the *Observateur* received inordinately heavy fines and/or prison sentences, including Ngaronde Djarma, Koumbo Singa Gali, Evariste Ngaralbaye and Tchanguiz Vatankanh. According to Reporters sans Frontières (RSF), these journalists have been pursued by the Chad government over the last three years. See the entry on Chad in the RSF's 2007 Report at www.rsf.org.

⁵⁴ A notable exception is Yorongar Ngarledji. The parties of Lol Mahamat Choua, Saleh Kebzabo, Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, Kamougué Wadal Abdelkader, Salibou Garba (this list is not exhaustive) have recently allied themselves with the MPS. As for Jean Bawoyeu Alingué, he was Idriss Deby's first prime minister.

the armed struggle, the only alternative that remains is to boycott elections, which aggravates the crisis.

2. The political platform of 13 August 2007

Strongly encouraged by the Europeans, who had a 3 billion CFA budget with which to support elections that could not be used without changes in the electoral process, and by France, which wanted to strengthen the power of President Deby by winning over the non-armed opposition and giving his regime a more democratic image, “the political agreement to strengthen the democratic process in Chad” appeared modest and ambiguous.⁵⁵

The discussions between representatives of the political parties in the presidential majority and the democratic opposition, which took place over a period of five months, between April and August 2007, concentrated on the electoral system.⁵⁶ Talks finally focused on four issues:⁵⁷ the composition of the CENI, updating the electoral roll, the legal framework for the elections, especially the electoral code, and the general political and security environment, with emphasis on the role of the civilian and military regional administrations and the future of the National Assembly, Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court.

⁵⁵ “Accord politique en vue du renforcement du processus démocratique au Tchad”, Republic of Chad, N’Djamena, 13 August 2007. However, this agreement, signed by only some of the representatives of the CPDC, includes some ambiguous and even dangerous elements, which limit its impact. Signed by Mahamat Hissène (MPS) and Abderaman Djasnabaille (ATD) on behalf of the majority and by Jean Alingué (UDR) and Salibou Garba (AND) for the opposition, the agreement was supported by Saleh Kebzabo (UNDR) and Abdelkader Kamougué (URD), who were part of the negotiating team. However, it was immediately rejected by Ngarledji Yorongar (FAR/PF), who had, however, been on the drafting committee for some time and by Valentin Neatobeye (PAP/JS), who felt that the agreement was a straightforward political manoeuvre to allow some political leaders “who had spent difficult and long years in the wilderness” to join the government. Yorongar Ngarledji, *Le Progrès*, 15 August 2007.

⁵⁶ In autumn 2006, the EU conducted an exploratory analysis of the Chad electoral system. Pierre Weiss, “Atelier de formation pilote à l’intention des responsables des partis politique”, 15 May 2007, N’Djamena.

⁵⁷ However, the discussions were initially more wide-ranging and went beyond the electoral framework. The opposition parties wanted to include the organisation of a national roundtable, a government of national unity and all their grievances with the government. However, the MPS (supported by the EU and France) succeeded in limiting them to the issue of the electoral process.

The final agreement, adopted and presented to the head of state on 13 August, undeniably improved conditions for the organisation of elections. For example:

- The CENI was redefined as an independent political body with 31 members, strict parity between the opposition and the majority and a president appointed by consensus. It was made responsible for the organisation and supervision of elections and all related operations, including updating the electoral roll, the distribution of voting cards and the publication of results. The administration, especially regional administrations, and the minister of the interior were therefore sidelined from the whole process in favour of an independent body, as in many other African countries.
- Updating the electoral roll, which was to be carried out in accordance with the most modern biometric standards, was to be preceded by a general census of the population.
- Important amendments were to be made to the electoral code, especially on the issues that had been contested most often during previous electoral consultations (voting by defence and security personnel, voting by Chad citizens living abroad, voting of nomads). Proportional voting by lists was adopted for legislative and local elections as was the principle of a single ballot paper.
- Finally, certain measures, such as the “demilitarisation of the regional administration” were to be implemented in order to guarantee the neutrality of the state during the process (Article IV).

However, there were serious legal reservations and strong political criticism of three provisions of the 13 August agreement. First, the proposed revision of the status of the members of the Supreme Court “to ensure periodic renewal, as with the Constitutional Council, and to remove their permanent status” was doubly ambiguous. Article 160, paragraph 4 of the constitution provides that members of the Constitutional Council shall be permanent appointments “for the duration of their mandate”. This provision, which would make any change in the composition of the council very difficult before the end of 2009, did nothing to change the way in which its members were appointed, which remained entirely in the hands of the president and the president of the National Assembly, that is under the control of the majority. Moreover, this reform could not be carried out without amending the constitution, but no one in the National Assembly or the presidency wanted to talk about this.

In addition, the first consequence of the decision taken by the signatories to postpone legislative elections

until the final quarter of 2009, a date now untenable,⁵⁸ prevented the holding of local elections, notably municipal elections. It had seemed feasible to organise these local elections in acceptable conditions (there were only 240 communes) and the population in many regions of the country fully expected them to be held. Worse still, postponement of municipal elections until 2010 means postponement of decentralisation for a further three years, to the great satisfaction of those who continue to oppose it, and with the greater risk of definitively eliminating a reform that is essential for the democratisation of the state.

Finally, the provision extending the mandate of the National Assembly until the final quarter of 2009,⁵⁹ which came after an initial extension of one year, was a serious infringement of the constitution. The lack of financial resources and time to organise the national census, which the agreement had agreed should take place prior to the production of an electoral roll, will oblige CENI to postpone legislative elections until 2010 and, without any doubt, to merge them with presidential elections, which would not displease President Deby's entourage.

The creation of a monitoring and support committee, with representatives of the international community, to ensure strict application of the agreement and its timetable, was a new element. The committee was initially seen as a rather encouraging feature of the agreement, even though the representatives of the UN, the EU, the AU and the Francophonie would only play the role of facilitators and maintain a secretariat. However, the government created an inter-ministerial committee to monitor application of the 13 August agreement and this committee took responsibility for redrafting most of the monitoring committee documents. Members of the opposition saw this as a way of bypassing the real monitoring committee and imposing texts on it.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ According to some Chadian leaders, the government hopes to organise legislative elections at the end of 2009 but has not yet set a date. Even if the security situation in the east of the country remains fragile and even though the reforms envisaged by the agreement have not been carried out, it seems that the government wants to organise these elections as a sign of goodwill to the international community. Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, September 2008.

⁵⁹ The exact date of the end of the current mandate of the National Assembly has not (yet) been formally set. The 13 August agreement stipulated simply that "considering the technical opinions that state it is necessary to wait until the final quarter of 2009, it is agreed, to accompany implementation of the agreement, to extend, by force majeure, the current legislature until the election of a new National Assembly".

⁶⁰ Crisis Group interview, members of the monitoring committee, N'Djamena, March-April 2008.

This agreement between political leaders⁶¹ was concluded without any consultation with representatives of civil society, notably the main trade unions, which had for several months been involved in a wide-ranging fight with the government. Some members of the opposition and the trade unions denounced the agreement. They claimed it in no way responded to the demands of the time and called for an inclusive dialogue to promote a general agreement.⁶² The armed rebellion categorically rejected any agreement, considering that this agreement was part of a wide-ranging plan to isolate and marginalise it.⁶³ In fact, after their entry into Deby's "open government", in April 2008, opposition members moderated their calls for an inclusive dialogue. The political opposition tends to ignore the rebellion when the latter appears in retreat, as it is the case today, but claims it is an essential interlocutor when it seems to be in a threatening position. This kind of strategic calculation is understandable. The opposition does not want to find itself excluded from any national dialogue. It therefore prefers to appear realistic when negotiating with the regime, in the hope of including its own demands as well as those of the rebellion on the agenda of negotiations.

At no time did the signatories to the agreement tackle the profound institutional reforms (justice, regional administration, land-use planning, police, army) that the country badly in need of to promote cohesion. Article 4 of the agreement, on the need for a secure environment in which to hold elections, remained vague. Without real work on the measures necessary to improve security, the elections could not be conducted in an environment favourable to resolving the crisis. In this agreement, President Deby certainly conceded a certain readjustment of the electoral process, but obtained in return the legitimisation of his election and his power from the opposition parties.

B. THE ARMED REBELLION

The main rebel groups are gathered in the Union of the Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD) led by Mahamat Nouri; the Assembly of the Forces for Change (RFC) led by Timane Erdimi and the Union of the Forces for Change and Democracy

⁶¹ Djibrine Assali Hamdallah, (Union des syndicats du Tchad), *Le Progrès*, 15 August 2007.

⁶² Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, August 2007.

⁶³ "Communiqué de presse du RFC", 16 August 2007, at www.tchadactuel.com/communiquedepresse.php?2007/08/16/22-communique-de-presse-du-rfc.

(UFCD) led by Adouma Hassaballah Jedareb.⁶⁴ Since independence, many rebel groups have disputed power with the central government. Most of their leaders come from the ranks of the government and often decide to rejoin it after negotiations. All the leaders of the armed groups that threaten the regime either have family ties with Deby, have been his ministers or have worked closely with his government. Since the disappearance of armed groups in the south of the country, the rebellion is northern in character and illustrates the ethnic divisions (Gorane, Zaghawa, Toubou, Arab) that have existed since the creation of FROLINAT in 1966.⁶⁵ This is clearly shown by the composition of the armed groups in Chad.

1. The rebellion in Chad

The fragmentation of the rebellion into more or less tribal groups and the discrepancy between the change they advocate and the behaviour of their men in the field is remarkable. Their behaviour is identical to that of the regime they are fighting. Far from developing a common political program to complement their military operations, the rebellion gives the impression that its objective, other than toppling Deby, has not been clearly established. The population still does not understand why these warlords fight each other, reach agreement and then start to fight each other again.⁶⁶ In addition, the careers of these rebel leaders strengthen this unstoppable chain of events. There are, in fact, no new men in the rebellion. All or nearly all of them were formed during the FROLINAT period. It is the leaders, their affiliations and supporters rather than the groups or alliances that are important.⁶⁷

This focus on confrontation is noticeable through the absence of a political program or even of a genuine political wing.⁶⁸ Authority is held only by the commanders-in-chief. They are very capable military

leaders but, in general, do not have the political muscle necessary to carry through the reforms the country needs. The organisation and chain of command are minimal and decisions are generally taken informally before the politicians have had the time to discuss the chosen military options in depth. This explains why the rebellion is unable to transform military successes into political victory and make itself credible in the eyes of the international community, particularly France.⁶⁹ Far from giving a positive image to their movements, the spokesmen are known for their unrealistic and unreliable analyses.⁷⁰ Deby's rhetoric against the "mercenaries" from Sudan⁷¹ seems to go down better with the international community, which wants to avoid a Chadian regime at the mercy of Khartoum.⁷²

The main rebel groups (UFDD, UFDD-Fondamentale, UFCD and the FUC⁷³) have tried to establish a unified command but have not succeeded in making one last for more than a few weeks or months.⁷⁴ Deby's strategy of dividing the rebellion coupled with external pressures have contributed to these successive fail-

⁶⁹ Crisis Group interviews, N'Djamena, Paris, Brussels, March-April 2008.

⁷⁰ For example, during the attack on N'Djamena, while all the international media present in the field announced the failure of the offensive, the rebellion's spokesman, Abderamane Koulamallah, continued to claim that the capital would fall "in a few hours". This lack of coherence gives the impression that the movement is not very well structured. Koulamallah was twice a minister under President Deby: minister of public works and transport (1993) and minister of culture, youth and sport (1996).

⁷¹ "Idriss Deby Itno, président du Tchad", France 24, 6 March 2008.

⁷² Crisis Group interviews, ambassadors in N'Djamena, Paris, Brussels, March-April 2008. Also see "La Force est au Tchad, mais où est l'ennemi ?", *Le Monde*, 24 May 2008.

⁷³ UFDD, UFCD (United Front for Democratic Change) and FUC (United Front for Change).

⁷⁴ Since the resurgence of the armed insurrection in 2003, at least five coalitions have been formed, but all of them soon fell apart. For example, the first coalition of the Zaghawa insurgents did not last long because of disputes over leadership between Timane Erdimi, Yaya Djilo (now supporting the government) and Abakar Tollimi. The two former men are Bideyat and the third is a Borogate. In April 2006, the second rebel coalition between the FUC and the RAFD became a dead letter after FUC unilaterally attacked N'Djamena. The Zaghawa insurgents criticised Mahamat Nour for going it alone. Subsequently, the agreement between the FUC and Deby ended its alliance with the other factions. The coalition created after the defection of the FUC, which included the UFDD, UFDD-F, RFC, UFCD and CNT, broke up after the Syrte Agreement, with Al Djineidi going over to the government's side in N'Djamena. The cooperation agreement signed at Hadjer Marfaine on 22 December 2007 also ended after the failed attack of February 2008.

⁶⁴ For more details on the rebel movements and their leaders, see Appendix D.

⁶⁵ The Chad National Liberation Front (FROLINAT) is a Chadian armed movement, created in June 1966 in Nyala, Sudan, to fight against the southern government.

⁶⁶ When asked why they applauded the rebels when the latter entered N'Djamena in February, some people replied: "We applauded the rebels just like we applauded the GUNT in 1980, Habré on 7 June 1990 and Deby on 1 December 1990. It is an instinctive reaction since 1979... We should applaud the provisional victors and hope they will make the changes we want. However, it is always the same outcome", Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, August 2008.

⁶⁷ Alex de Waal, "Making sense of Chad", *Monthly Review*, 4 February 2008.

⁶⁸ Gérard Prunier, "Chad: between Sudan's Blitzkrieg and Darfur's War", *openDemocracy*, 19 February 2007.

ures.⁷⁵ Each rebel group accuses members of other-groups of receiving money from the government as an inducement to abandon the armed struggle. Co-option works just as well with the rebels as it does with the political opposition.

Irrespective of these leadership quarrels, ethnic fragmentation and Sudanese intervention, the aims of the rebellion remain mainly legitimate. The Deby regime's way of running the country, the corruption, his clan's monopolisation of the state and his refusal to carry out genuine reforms are the reasons why most rebel leaders turned to the armed struggle. The fact that these men have themselves been close collaborators of Deby shows that his management and operation of the regime is flawed. They all express deep disappointment about him, which shows, above and beyond any personal grievances, that Deby has a propensity to govern alone, without considering the opinions of his collaborators, who are restricted to implementing his policies and who are humiliated on a daily basis.⁷⁶ One would not therefore exclude the grievances of the rebel army from all discussion about the crisis in Chad. On the contrary, the very existence of the armed rebellion and its real grievances should occupy an important place in any framework for resolving the crisis.

The number of combatants in each rebel group is not easy to establish because of frequent defections, alliances and counter-alliances. Moreover, the websites of the rebel groups⁷⁷ have a tendency to exaggerate the number of their combatants and underestimate the number of combatants of rival factions. The French army in Chad estimates the total number of Chadian rebels at between 10,000 and 15,000.⁷⁸ Other studies estimate the total number as 9,000.⁷⁹ Most of the newspapers that covered the attack of February 2008

estimated that around 3,000 rebel combatants entered N'Djamena.

The rebel groups do not all have the resources to maintain a permanent and large army and prefer to recruit for specific military operations. In addition, in Chad, the status of combatants varies and individuals may swell the ranks of the rebellion in the event of military success or simply abandon the fight to cultivate their fields during the rainy season.

2. The agreements between the government and the armed groups

In recent months, attacks, counter-attacks and sporadic clashes between Chad government forces and rebel factions have not prevented more or less official contacts with the government. These contacts resulted in the signature of a certain number of agreements, the most important of which were between the FUC and the government in December 2006 and the Syrte Agreement of 27 October 2007. Based on power sharing and the disarmament and reintegration of rebel forces into the ANT, these agreements were rather imprecise on the details of how to implement these operations. This ambiguity allows the belligerents considerable scope to interpret them as they please. The rebel factions see them as steps towards a final and inclusive settlement, while the government sees them as final agreements that should lead to armed group support for the government.

The distrust between the two sides allows a climate of suspicion to prevail regarding the intentions of each other. As with the political opposition, negotiations then become deals between leaders. The failure to resolve the real problems results in combatants deserting their leaders and joining the remaining rebel movements. In the absence of a third party with the power to impose implementation of these agreements, the scope for success remains very limited. The December 2006 agreement between the FUC and the government and the Syrte Agreement of October 2007 clearly show this.

- The agreement between the FUC and the government (December 2006)

The agreement between the FUC and the government forms part of the dynamics of rebellion/support. Achieved thanks to the funding provided by Libya and Sudan,⁸⁰ the agreement signed with the FUC

⁷⁵ In this context, the RDC chief of staff's adherence to the government on 18 August 2008 was especially notable.

⁷⁶ Crisis Group telephone interviews, September 2008. For example, it is said in N'Djamena that in 1997, the departure of Youssouf Togoïmi (subsequently minister of justice, of defence, and of the interior from 1990 to 1997) to join the rebellion was caused by a humiliating episode inflicted by the presidential guard. Togoïmi (then interior minister) had been called for an appointment with Deby and was denied access to the palace by presidential guard soldiers although he had identified himself and said he had an appointment. An altercation followed and the minister was slapped by one of the soldiers.

⁷⁷ Especially, www.tchadactuel.com, www.alwihdainfo.com, www.tchadvision.com, www.tchadespoir.com.

⁷⁸ Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, August 2008.

⁷⁹ Gérard Prunier, "Armed Movements in Sudan, Chad, CAR, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia", Centre for International Peace Operations, Berlin, February 2008, pp. 7-8.

⁸⁰ After the signature of the agreement between the FUC and the Chad government, Mahamat Nour was accused on the website www.alwihdainfo.com (close to the Chad armed re-

included a general amnesty for the movement's combatants and the appointment of its leaders to government posts. Mahamat Nour was appointed defence minister in March 2007. The agreement also provided for the integration of FUC forces into the ANT or their demobilisation in the three months following signature of the agreement.⁸¹

Mahamat Nour's anti-Zaghawa sentiments were well known and so a break between Nour and Deby was only a matter of time, despite the frequent denials of both men.⁸² The integration of the FUC forces into the ANT never really began.⁸³ The arrival in N'Djamena of 1,000 FUC men and the stationing of another 2,000 in the Goz Beida and Ouaddaï regions, the home of most of the Tama and Dadjo combatants of the FUCD (part of the FUC), with no prospect of integration, added to the confusion and increased the level of suspicion.⁸⁴ Frequent clashes between Zaghawa combatants in the ANT and Tama elements in the FUC led to the massive desertion of the latter in October 2007, apparently to join the ranks of the UFDD.

bel groups) of having "betrayed" the movement for "petrodollars that Libya and Sudan offered him in exchange for his support of the government." It is easy to understand why Libya wanted to convince this Khartoum ally to join the Chad government. Gaddafi did not appreciate Sudan's attempt to replace Deby with Nour in April 2005. On the other hand, Sudan's involvement in Nour's adhesion to the government seems curious. The explanation generally put forward is that the Sudanese wanted to kill two birds with one stone: get Nour off their hands (they had begun to doubt his political capacity) and they also wanted to encourage Deby to get him to put pressure on JEM with the aim of encouraging this movement to join the negotiations in Abuja that had just begun.

⁸¹ When this agreement was signed, the Chad Minister for Infrastructure, Adoum Younousmi, who was very close to Deby, estimated FUC forces at 3,000-4,000. See "Chad rivals back home after peace deal, but threats remain", Agence France-Presse, 25 December 2006.

⁸² In an interview with RFI on 12 October 2007, Mahamat Nour said that his relations with Deby were good, while adding that he could not say the same about his relations with "all the president's men". See www.rfi.fr/actu/fr/articles/094/article_57606.asp.

⁸³ For example, while the agreement was in force, FUC forces continued to wear their dark green uniform, which is strangely similar to that of the Sudanese army. Crisis Group interviews, July 2007; and "Early to war: Child Soldiers in the Chad Conflict", Human Rights Watch, July 2007.

⁸⁴ While the Zaghawa officers in the ANT criticise the FUC forces for operating independently and not respecting the orders of the military chiefs, the FUC commanders suspect Deby of dispersing them around the country to weaken them.

In these conditions, the break between Deby and Nour was not long in coming.⁸⁵ Having insidiously accused Deby of trying to poison him, Nour was sacked from his post as defence minister on 30 November 2007. On the verge of being arrested or assassinated, he found refuge in the Libyan Embassy in N'Djamena, where he stayed until the turn of events allowed him to leave in February 2008. According to sources close to the rebels, Nour joined the National Alliance.⁸⁶ The other rebel groups, incapable of overthrowing the government in N'Djamena, contented themselves with conducting a few minor operations.⁸⁷ Apparently, the strategy of the UFDD and the RFC involves carrying out hit-and-run attacks against ANT to capture weapons and equipment and maintain the insecurity in the east of the country and along the border with Sudan.

□ The Syrte Agreement of October 2007

In May 2007, the remaining armed groups, under Sudanese pressure, began talks with the Chad government in Tripoli. These discussions were interrupted after the rebels demanded an inclusive dialogue, including the political opposition, while Libya proposed disarming the rebellion by buying the rebels' weapons. Neither President Deby nor the rebel leaders seemed to be particularly interested in the negotiations, with both parties believing that the rainy season then under way prevented any significant military offensive. The international community, which was getting ready to deploy EUFOR and MINURCAT in eastern Chad and the Central African Republic, was favourable to continuing the discussions in Tripoli.⁸⁸

On 1 October, a first step was made when the CDRT, a dissident faction of the CDR (Revolutionary Democratic Council), agreed to sign an agreement with the government in N'Djamena. On 3 October, the Tripoli talks began again and resulted in the signature

⁸⁵ The alliance between Deby and Nour also intensified inter-Zaghawa divisions and several senior officials and army officers later defected. "Good year for President Deby, bad year for Chad", IRIN, 28 May 2007.

⁸⁶ This is what the UFDD website claims: www.tchadvision.com. However, note that the individual himself had not yet made a public statement on this question at the time of writing.

⁸⁷ Towards the end of 2006 and throughout 2007, sporadic clashes took place between government forces and the rebel groups in Abéché and Adré as well as in the Hadjer Marfaïne region near the Sudanese border. On 25 November 2006, the UFDD even briefly occupied the town of Abéché. The RAFD also entered Guereda on 1 December 2006.

⁸⁸ Libya wanted a solution for the Chad crisis, before getting involved in what was then considered to be the final stage in peace talks about Darfur, which were due to resume at the end of October 2007.

of a new agreement, this time including the UFDD, UFDD-F, RFC and CNT (Chadian National Concord Movement). The Syrte Agreement was officially signed on 25 October 2007. The signatories' interpretation of this agreement seemed to be rather confused. While the rebel leaders said it was a simple "agreement in principle" that did not necessarily involve a ceasefire,⁸⁹ Deby kept repeating that this was the final agreement that he would sign with the rebels.⁹⁰

As might be expected from these different statements, as soon as the agreement was signed, the rebels accused Deby of not making the least effort to implement it and threatened to end the ceasefire, which they effectively did in November 2007 when clashes took place in Farchana and Biltine. In the end, the only signatory of the agreement that agreed to support the government and go to N'Djamena was Aldjineidi (CDR) who is currently a member of the government. The other rebel leaders accuse him of having received a significant reward from Deby in exchange for his support.⁹¹ The Syrte Agreement was stillborn.

In December 2007, the UFDD, the UFDD-F and the RFC announced they had agreed to establish a unified military command led by Colonel Fizzani⁹² (UFDD). However, despite long discussions, these three groups were not able to reach agreement on a common political structure, which confirmed the rebellion's focus on the armed struggle. Throughout December 2007, sporadic clashes took place in eastern Chad. The Chad and Sudan governments accused each other of carrying out air raids on each other's territory. The Chad government organised many demonstrations to protest Sudanese support for the rebels. The absence of a monitoring framework in these two agreements meant it was largely an illusion to imagine they would be implemented.

3. The rebel attack against N'Djamena in February and its consequences

At the end of January 2008, strongly armed by Sudan and with the best internal coordination it had ever had, the rebel coalition launched a major offensive to take N'Djamena. Apparently united up until their

entry into the capital on 31 January, the inevitable rivalry between Nouri (UFDD) and Erdimi (RFC) began to appear when victory appeared to be within reach.⁹³ This situation is the root of the current configuration of the rebellion and determines the present dynamics among the Zaghawa.

After crossing the country, the rebel forces poured into N'Djamena from Massaguet, early on Saturday 2 February.⁹⁴ Making their way through the city, they divided into two columns. One column moved up Avenue Mobutu, where it was halted at the Union roundabout by tank fire coming from in front of the presidency, 3km away. The second column moved up Avenue 10 October and took control of all the city's eastern neighbourhoods. This column was not able to advance towards the Place de l'Indépendance because of sustained fire from the presidential guard's armoured vehicles.⁹⁵ When night fell, the positions seemed to be stable: the whole city, except the neighbourhood of the presidency, was in the hands of the rebels. Entrenched in his palace, Deby offered fierce resistance to stop the presidential palace being taken and was eventually victorious.

Two arguments are generally advanced to explain the rebel defeat. First, disagreement between the rebels, apparently because they could not agree on who should become president.⁹⁶ Second, the tactical advantage held by the president, who knew that the rebels were far from their bases and therefore inevitably facing the problem of fuel and ammunition supplies. Time was on his side, especially because the tanks he had drawn up around the presidency, made it into an

⁹³ After the failure of the attack on N'Djamena, the media close to the UFDD accused the RFC of treason. In fact, it seems that the plan of attack involved a "third rebel column", provided mainly by the RFC, that was supposed to reinforce the main rebel force that entered the capital, with men and ammunition. The absence of reinforcements at that time, due to a counter-order by Timane Erdimi, allegedly explains the rebellion's failure.

⁹⁴ They took the Ligna route and encountered no resistance until they reached the Chagoua roundabout, where a clash took place with ANT forces positioned in the disused building of the former National Assembly. The first civilian casualties were reported here because people who came out to applaud the rebels were caught in the crossfire. Crisis Group interviews, N'Djamena, March and August 2008.

⁹⁵ Crisis Group interviews, N'Djamena, March and August 2008.

⁹⁶ Abderrahmane Koulamalah, spokesman for the rebel coalition, explicitly recognised this a few days later when he told Radio France Internationale that the armed opposition had committed an "historic error" by not reaching agreement on a government of national unity before attacking N'Djamena. See interview with Koulamalah, 21 March 2008. "Tchad, le manque de cohésion a coûté la victoire aux rebelles", www.rfi.fr.

⁸⁹ "Chad says peace deal definitive but rebels quibble", Reuters, 5 October 2007.

⁹⁰ "Accord de Tripoli: Y aura-t-il la paix après ?", *Tchadactuel*, 29 October 2007.

⁹¹ The website of the ANR (National Resistance Alliance), a dissident group of the CNT claims this. See www.anr.typepad.com, "Comment Aldjineidi a négocié son ralliement", <http://anr.typepad.com/anr/2007/12/lu-sur-lyadisht.html>.

⁹² Fizzani is an Arab from the Ouaddaï region.

impregnable fortress.⁹⁷ From the rebellion's viewpoint, the failure in February has had consequences on the cohesion of the coalition, the circumstantial and even forced character of which was admitted by the rebels themselves.⁹⁸ The rebels withdrew from N'Djamena, finally finding refuge on the other side of the border with Sudan. However, it cannot be said that they suffered a serious defeat.⁹⁹

Learning the lessons of this failure, Sudan encouraged the rebellion to equip itself with a more coherent political structure and with one, more representative leader. However, the pressure from Sudan was not always welcomed by all the Chad rebels. For example, the Zaghawa combatants of the RFC believe that the Sudanese authorities plan to impose Mahamat Nouri as the head of the coalition. Nevertheless, on 25 February 2008, the UFDD announced the creation of a "National Alliance" led by Mahamat Nouri with Timane Erdimi as vice-president. The most recent communiqués¹⁰⁰ have announced that Adouma Hassaballah has joined the National Alliance. The alliance therefore currently includes Mahamat Nouri's UFDD, Abdelwahid Aboud Mackaye's UFDD-F, Adouma Hassaballah's UFDD and Ahmat Soubiane's FSR.¹⁰¹ Recently, a faction of the Toubou rebellion of the MDJT (Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad) announced its decision to join the National Alliance. The RFC's participation remains hypothetical, having been neither clearly denied nor confirmed.

Subject to the frequent changes in alliance among the Chad rebels, the UFDD and the non-Zaghawa groups are currently leading the rebellion. While not denied, sources indicate that members of the RFC met government representatives shortly after the February attack. In fact, members of the RFC are increasingly engaged in discussions about the need to pursue the fratricidal inter-Zaghawa fighting. Uninformed or not, the Chad government claims that the RFC is about to join the

government and that Timane Erdimi has been offered the post of prime minister, a post he apparently refused. Attempts have been made to begin negotiations in Tripoli although not with much enthusiasm. Libya wants to continue its role as an eternal mediator for Chad.

After several sporadic military incidents in April and May, the National Alliance launched a campaign of hit-and-run attacks to remind everyone of its strike force before the lull during the rainy season. Knowing that it would be very difficult to take N'Djamena at this moment, given that the roads would be impassable because of the rain, the rebellion concentrated on occupying a few important towns in the east, such as Goz Beida, Am Dam, Biltine and Oum Hadjer, before withdrawing a few hours later. This show of force was costly for the rebellion, which suffered significant losses at the hands of the ANT, which brought its whole arsenal to bear on the rebels.

C. DEBY AND HIS ALLIES

Apart from the Sudanese authorities, the most serious threat to Deby lies in the alliance between former allies who are determined to overthrow him. Curiously, this threat also strengthens him: the opportunist nature of this alliance and Sudanese involvement are his trump cards. Supported by French lobbying and able to count on intelligence and, where necessary, logistical support from the French army, President Deby is in a strong position to refuse any dialogue with the rebels.

1. Internal weakening

When he went to the front to personally lead the defence of the capital, Deby realised how weary the Zaghawa combatants were, including those from his own Bideyat clan and the presidential guard. Most of his soldiers wanted to fall back on N'Djamena to find shelter for their families and consider other means of survival. Quickly returning to the capital in order to avoid putting himself in danger,¹⁰² the president withdrew to his palace, refusing French President Nicolas Sarkozy's offer of evacuation.¹⁰³ He held several

⁹⁷ Crisis Group interview with a government minister, N'Djamena, April 2008.

⁹⁸ The rebel leaders generally acknowledge the objective of their coalition "wanted by our sponsors, is to overthrow Deby Itno". After that, "we will see...". See *Jeune Afrique*, www.jeuneafrique.com/jeune_afrique/article_jeune_frique.asp?art_cle=LIN05116troisnuertn0.

⁹⁹ Apparently, some wounded men were abandoned on the road, but most of the rebel vehicles reached their sanctuary in the east.

¹⁰⁰ Available on the UFDD website, www.tchadvision.com. See especially communiqué n°3 of 28 March 2008, signed by the National Alliance's spokesman, Ali Gueddeï.

¹⁰¹ Although it did not participate in the attack on N'Djamena, the FSR participated in a movement to harass government forces around Adré.

¹⁰² It seems that treachery within the presidential guard allowed rebels to locate the position of an armoured car in which the president was stationed. Firing was then concentrated on this position, forcing Deby to withdraw to N'Djamena in an unmarked car. The ANT's chief of staff, General Daoud Soumain, was killed at the battle of Massaguet. Crisis Group interviews, N'Djamena, March and August 2008.

¹⁰³ It seems that at this stage, the French authorities had no more illusions about Deby's chances of surviving this attack.

meetings there in order to re-mobilise the presidential guard, take stock of the residual support and organise a counter-offensive. Sudanese rebels of JEM, who had come from Darfur, also arrived in the city¹⁰⁴ to assist the ANT. This support was decisive. The Chadian rebels did not have the weapons required to defend themselves from the Chad army helicopters and retreated, which allowed the government forces to regain their confidence.

Clashes on 2 and 3 February had significant military consequences for both camps. Many soldiers deserted from the government army. The deaths of important military leaders, such as the Chad army chief of staff, General Daoud Soumaine, affected the troops' morale. Today, the most visible consequence of the events of February is a major arms race. Government rearmament could be assessed at the military parades during the ceremonies commemorating the 48th anniversary of Chad's independence.¹⁰⁵ The Chad air force has also increased its firepower, which now includes missiles, tanks, multi-tube rocket launchers, helicopters and bombers.

2. Bideyat and Kobé loyalties

Despite suffering many defections in recent years, President Deby can always count on the loyalty of the Bideyat and Kobé clans that form the presidential guard and JEM. General Mahamat Ali Abdallah,¹⁰⁶ a Kobé, remained at his side during the rebel offensive, successfully leading the presidential guard in combat. The presidential camp was also strengthened by the addition of Yaya Dillo and Hassan Abdelkerim Bouyebri. These two Bideyat were among the first young intellectual Zaghawa to defect to create the SCUD (Platform for Change, Unity and Democracy). Having wrangled with the Erdimi brothers, they rejoined the presidential camp on 11 November 2007. Their adhesion was a message to young Zaghawa: defection is an adventure with no future.

Is the sacred union of the Zaghawa is once again at the heart of power? Although the existence of RFC dissidents requires qualification of such a proposition,

it is still true that the break between the different clans has never been total. In fact, the differences during the last three years on the representation of each clan within the state has not ruled out working together at the local level.¹⁰⁷

By moving closer than ever to the rebel Sudanese Kobé chief, Khalil Ibrahim, and by supporting his movement, JEM, Deby positions himself as a defender of the Kobé in the face of the hostility of the Khartoum government and its armed wings. It is true that this support has not always been unfailing and has certainly not flowed in one direction – JEM has become an important element of Deby's defence strategy – but it has allowed him, and still does, to avoid alienating the local Kobé chiefs.

3. French brothers-in-arms

France has provided constant support to President Deby's regime since 1990 and played a major role in his rise to power. The military cooperation agreement between France and Chad, signed by Abdelkader Kamougue, then foreign minister in the Malloum government, in 1976, continues to provide a framework for relations between the two countries, although non-military cooperation has suffered a considerable decline in terms of resources and aspirations. This agreement provides for French intelligence and logistical support for the ANT and authorises the stationing of a French contingent of approximately 1,000 men in Chad, with responsibility for protecting French citizens and training the Chad army.¹⁰⁸ The military nature of relations between France and Chad goes a long way to explaining the influence of the French Minister of Defence and the French armed forces in Chad and in the management of the current crisis.

Favourable to the present regime and Deby staying in power, the French government encouraged the constitutional amendment in 2005, accepted the results of the 2006 elections and provided military protection to its ally against rebel attacks in April of that same year. The French government remains a firm supporter of the Chad president and is especially admiring of the former rebel's capacity for survival. To this diplo-

¹⁰⁴ Apparently, they were already positioned before the 2 February attack. See Gérard Prunier, "Chad: between Sudan's Blitzkrieg and Darfur's War", openDemocracy, 19 February 2007.

¹⁰⁵ "L'armée tchadienne dévoile son artillerie", *Le Progrès*, 12 August 2008.

¹⁰⁶ However, the websites of the Chad opposition, such as www.tchadactuel.com and www.alwihdainfo.com, frequently report anecdotes about Deby's distrust of Mahamat Ali Abdallah (appointed defence minister in January 2008).

¹⁰⁷ For more on inter-Zaghawa rivalries in recent years, see Crisis Group Report, *Chad: Back towards War?*, op. cit.

¹⁰⁸ Operation Epervier has 1,250 soldiers, three Puma helicopters, six F1 Mirages, one C 135 Hercules refuelling aircraft and three C135 troop carriers. France has a military base in N'Djamena and another in Abéché. For more details, see the ministry of defence website at www.defense.gouv.fr/ema/enjeux_defense/operations_exterieures/tchad/dossier_de_reference/les_elements_francais_au_tchad_eft.

matic praise should be added the praise given by the French chief of staff, who said they found Deby as combative and courageous at the beginning of 2007 as he was in the struggles of the 1980s.¹⁰⁹

Critics of the Villepin government's armed interventions in Chad and the Central African Republic¹¹⁰ and the prospects of a change of leader of the French state led to a slight change in French policy at the beginning of 2007, in two main ways. First an attempt to improve the democratic image of the Chad regime, which involved French support for negotiations between the government and opposition parties. Second, French desire to make the French military presence a European one to avoid accusations of neo-colonialism. However, the main thrust of French policy, which is to support President Deby, remains unchanged, despite the sometimes unsteady relations, especially with regard to the issue of the deployment of a peace force.

French diplomacy has made many efforts, in both New York and Brussels, to ensure that the deployment of the European force (EUFOR Chad/CAR) in support of the UN operation (MINURCAT) does not "interfere" with Chad policy and is not associated with any political conditionality. Moreover, by promoting a political agreement with the opposition that is limited to electoral issues and that extends the mandate of the National Assembly by two years, Paris succeeded in protecting and prolonging the Deby regime, without the latter having to pay any real political price.

At the beginning of the rebel offensive, France's position was at the very least ambiguous. Although there was no sign of France abandoning Deby to his fate,¹¹¹ the impression remained that the Elysée had noted the imminence of a change of regime in Chad.¹¹² While in 2006, Mirage fighter planes flew over and threatened a rebel column marching towards the capital, France this time contented itself with protecting the airport from which foreign nationals were evacuated. Analy-

sis shows that a certain number of hesitations and calculations were the reason for this ambiguity. First, although French military intelligence knew the rebels were strongly armed by Sudan, they were unsure whether they had missiles capable of hitting their aircraft. In these conditions, it was necessary to avoid any confrontation that could turn out to be militarily dangerous. Subsequently, it seems that there had been contact with rebel leaders in order to ensure that the latter would not interfere with the evacuation.¹¹³

It cannot also be excluded that France wanted to see Deby cornered in order to exact a higher price for its support. The most important thing that France wanted in return for its support was for the Chad regime to review its difficult attitude to the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, on which France insisted as its contribution to resolving the Darfur conflict.¹¹⁴ Had the rebels not been under the influence of Khartoum, Deby would have had to pay a high price for his lack of co-operation on this issue. Deby is hardly popular with the former colonial power but he is seen as "a lesser evil" in comparison to a regime controlled by Khartoum.¹¹⁵ The constraints imposed on France by its European partners, anxious to maintain the impartiality of EUFOR, considerably limited the French leaders' margin of manoeuvre.¹¹⁶ Hesitation in the Elysée can therefore be explained by a deliberate decision to wait and see. Before deciding on what course to follow in response to any combat, the top priority was to first evacuate French nationals.

During 3 February, the date of the victory, France made up its mind.¹¹⁷ According to several sources, France supplied arms and ammunition to the Chad army through Libya.¹¹⁸ The French army was able to nego-

¹⁰⁹ See the analysis by Christophe Boibouvier, "Idriss Deby, la stratégie de survie", *Jeune Afrique*, 14 February 2006.

¹¹⁰ Crisis Group Report, *Central African Republic*, op. cit.

¹¹¹ On the contrary, all the statements made by French officials on 31 January and 1 February indicated that France "would reject the armed overthrow of a constitutional regime". France condemned "a brutal attack against a legal government, against an elected president". Statement of Bernard Kouchner, French foreign minister, "Pour comprendre la crise au Tchad", *La Croix*, 3 February 2008.

¹¹² After the rebels entered N'Djamena, the Elysée said it made an offer to Deby "to save his life". Deby rejected this proposal, preferring to die if necessary in N'Djamena. See "Poursuite des combats dans N'Djamena", Agence France-Presse, 3 February 2008.

¹¹³ The rebel coalition's spokesman recognised this, stating that: "We did not take the airport in order not to hinder the evacuation of foreign nationals, and now the French army allows (Chadian) helicopters to use it to launch attacks on us", Abderaman Koulamalah, "Poursuite des combats dans N'Djamena", Agence France-Presse, 3 February 2008.

¹¹⁴ Another was Deby's pardon of the members of the Zoué's Ark a few weeks after the battle of N'Djamena. See "L'appui si discret de Paris à Deby", *Libération*, 9 February 2008.

¹¹⁵ Crisis Group interviews, Paris, April 2008.

¹¹⁶ This means of pressure should not be underestimated by other countries contributing to EUFOR. Crisis Group interviews, Paris, Brussels, March/April 2008.

¹¹⁷ Several meetings were held on the situation in Chad at the Elysée on the weekend of 2-3 February, despite the marriage of President Sarkozy on 2 February. Crisis Group interviews, February 2008.

¹¹⁸ According to the Agence de presse africaine, "it is thanks to the Libyan ammunitions, conveyed by the French army's logistics, that the President Deby Itno was able to make operational the T55 tanks that guarded his palace and which

tiate the repatriation of its nationals with the rebel alliance while round trips of the French air force between Libreville in Gabon and N'Djamena transported ammunition to Deby's army through Libya. The French army also allowed Chad army helicopters to take off from its military base. According to the rebel spokesman Abderaman Koulamalah, the French army helped jam their satellite telephone network.¹¹⁹ The French army detachment in N'Djamena supplied intelligence on the position and advance of the rebels to the government army, which the rebel leaders claim allowed Deby to overcome their offensive.¹²⁰

The arrival of Nicolas Sarkozy in the Elysée and the formation of new teams in the president's office and at the Quai d'Orsay did not result in profound changes in Paris's approach to the Chad problem.¹²¹ Despite the limited and late intervention on behalf of Deby and their insistence on a commission of enquiry, Paris remains supportive of the regime in place and not especially favourable to a genuine political debate on tackling the deep-seated problems that perpetuated the crisis in Chad. Paris was content to point out the dilapidated state of the political opposition and the rebellion's lack of credibility and political vision, while supporting a regime that does everything possible to control the political space and prevent the emergence of countervailing democratic forces.

D. AFTER FEBRUARY 2008

After the attack on N'Djamena, the government declared a state of emergency on 14 February and took a certain number of measures that gave the impression that the presidency was paranoid with regard to security issues. The government dug an enormous military trench around the capital, limiting entry and exit to the city; barricaded the area around the presidential

had ran out of ammunitions and thus loosen the noose around him". "Le président Deby Itno en Libye pour une visite de travail", Agence de presse africaine, 23 July 2008. Also see Gérard Prunier, "Chad: between Sudan's Blitzkrieg and Darfur's War", openDemocracy, 19 February 2007; and "Paris va livrer des missiles Eryx à Deby", *La Lettre du continent*, 12 February 2008.

¹¹⁹ Laurent d'Ersu and Jean-Christophe Ploquin, "La France a permis à Idriss Déby de sauver son régime", *La Croix*, 8 February 2008.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ The "Zoe's Ark" affair was a headache for the new French president and gave the Chad government an opportunity to criticise the attitude of westerners towards Chad. However, in the end, in view of the outcome of this unfortunate affair, only humanitarian workers paid the cost, suffering more than ever from harassment by the Chad authorities.

palace; and cut down all the trees along the Avenue Charles de Gaulle so they could not serve as hiding places for snipers in the case of another attack.¹²² The government also took advantage of the state of emergency to restrict political and civil rights, conduct house searches,¹²³ restrict movement, evict communities and destroy their homes in entire neighbourhoods of N'Djamena, resulting in the displacement of thousands of people, mostly without compensation.¹²⁴

In addition, Regulation 5 on the freedom of the press considerably hampered the media's work.¹²⁵ The fighting also resulted in the flight of around 30,000 people to Cameroon.¹²⁶ Following these measures and the arrest of three of its leaders, the political opposition suspended its participation in the monitoring committee created by the 13 August agreement. MJE rebels were present and visible in the city until mid-March.¹²⁷ These soldiers, who were particularly aggressive, ensured security at key points and carried out identity checks on various pretexts.¹²⁸ The government launched a campaign to search houses for goods looted from public buildings and shops. Fearing reprim-

¹²² Different versions have been given about the felling of these trees, including that their roots were destroying the pavement. Some matter-of-factly say that the timber was simply sold at the N'Djamena markets, to the advantage of a few officials.

¹²³ Crisis Group interviews with member of civil society, N'Djamena, March 2008.

¹²⁴ "The state of emergency allowed the government to proceed to an operation of evictions of 1,500 families occupying land it then took. Some of these families have been relocated and compensated but not all", see "Tchad: Les oubliés de N'Djamena", communiqué Caritas, 18 August 2008. These evictions had been planned for a long time and were not due to the rebel attack. Crisis Group interviews with senior officials, N'Djamena, March/April 2008. Crisis Group has not been able to find any ethnic correlation between the ethnic groups of the rebel attackers and the people evicted in N'Djamena. Crisis Group interviews, members of civil society, N'Djamena, March 2008. Even the Zaghawa neighbourhood of Amdjarass was removed at the beginning of April, *Le Progrès*, 4 April 2008.

¹²⁵ Regulation n°005/PR/2008 of 26 February 2008 on the Chad Press Regime.

¹²⁶ UNICEF Press release, 5 February 2008; "Situation report: Humanitarian needs and response in Chad: Information Bulletin", OCHA, 7 February 2008; "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad", UNSC, S/2008/215, 1 April 2008.

¹²⁷ Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, March 2008. The state of emergency was lifted one month later on 14 March 2008.

¹²⁸ Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, August 2008: "They asked me for the key of my motorbike, they started it up and went off without a word. When I tried to protest, they put a Kalashnikov against my head. They were Toros-Boros. Two days later, I noticed my motorbike in front of the presidency..."

sals, looters spontaneously dumped everything they had stolen in the streets. Nevertheless, abuses were recorded during the searches. Government personnel stole goods that citizens had acquired honestly under the pretext that they appeared to be new, or that they did not have the invoice or that the military simply liked them.¹²⁹

The attack on N'Djamena and the arrest of three opposition leaders on 3 February, namely Lol Mahamat Choua, Ngarledji Yorongar and Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, all suspected of colluding with the rebellion, represented a halt to implementation of the 13 August agreement. After their "reappearance", Choua and Yorongar claimed they were kidnapped by the Secret Service.¹³⁰ Ibni Oumar is still disappeared. Most observers believe he was probably killed hours after his arrest. The CPDC withdrew from the monitoring committee, but President Deby did not care. The state of emergency allowed him to issue several decrees that violated the very principle of the agreement,¹³¹ without the consent of either the monitoring committee or the National Assembly. Despite the government's appeal and constant pressure from France, the CPDC set three conditions for rejoining the monitoring committee: 1) an end to the state of emergency; 2) clarification of Ibni Oumar's situation; and 3) the organisation of an inclusive dialogue, including the rebel forces.

Responding favourably to French pressure, the Chad government set up a commission of inquiry to investigate the events of February, in the hope that this would moderate the opposition's demands. However, this commission was very controversial, especially its form, official name, composition and chair, namely the president of the National Assembly, Nassour Guelengdouksia, a close colleague of Deby.¹³² The oppo-

sition wanted an independent commission chaired by the UN High Commission for Human Rights and so a compromise was found with the commission being chaired by Maitre Allaissem Djaibe, the president of the bar, who was initially to be Guelengdouksia's assistant. The government also accepted international observers and allowed the UN High Commission for Human Rights to send technical teams to support the investigation in the field.

The commission began its work in May. For the opposition, its credibility mainly depended on the role of the neutral international observers and especially on the verdict about Ibni Oumar and the situation of the other disappeared. On 5 August 2008, the commission of inquiry's report was officially submitted to President Deby, who said at the time that he would conduct a "meticulous follow-up" before submitting it to the government.¹³³ At a Council of Ministers meeting on 14 August 2008, the Chad government stated it "had noted this report" and that "considering the public desire for clarification of the events, the government has created an inter-ministerial commission that will define the modalities, the places and the form under which this report will be made available to the public. Moreover, the government accepts the inquiry's suggestion that a committee should be created, at the appropriate time, to monitor this work and refer it to the judiciary to take the case forward, as convenient".¹³⁴

According to the opposition, the time taken by the government to make the contents of the report public would have been used to remove all compromising information from the commission's conclusions. In order to stop any rumours, the government made the report public on 3 September 2008. The report concluded that Ibni Oumar was dead and implicated the Chad army without personally naming the people involved in his arrest and death.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, March, August 2008.

¹³⁰ Although some sources claim that Deby himself was behind these arrests, some Chad opposition leaders accuse his entourage, especially Mahamat Ali Abdallah, of wanting to strengthen his position in the government. Crisis Group interviews, March 2008.

¹³¹ For example, although the 13 August agreement stipulated that members of the armed forces should vote on the day before the rest of the population so that they could be confined to their barracks on election day, new decrees repealed this point. During the discussions that preceded the agreement, the opposition had made this issue a question of principle.

¹³² This commission was initially called "Commission of inquiry into the Sudanese aggression between 28 January and 8 February and its consequences", decree no 324/PR/08. After the controversy provoked by this name, combined with international pressure, the commission was renamed, "Commission of inquiry into events in the Republic of Chad between

28 January and 8 February 2008 and their consequences", decree no 525/PR/2008.

¹³³ See the website of the presidency of Chad, www.presidentetchad.org/synthese_06_08_08.htm.

¹³⁴ See *ibid*, www.presidentetchad.org/synthese_15_08_08.htm

¹³⁵ According to the report, Ibni Oumar was arrested on 3 February 2008 after the rebels withdrew from N'Djamena. The soldiers who came to arrest him at his home "wore ANT uniforms" (p. 65 of the report) and "although no information or proof has been obtained about his fate ... he is presumed dead" (p. 83). However, the report says that "the whole truth about Ibni Oumar's fate will probably be impossible to find unless the state's highest authorities find the necessary political will. As the involvement of a state service, in this case the ANT, is clearly demonstrated, only the willingness of the Chad state would be likely to allow the truth to come out,

In response, the Chad government published a document in which the government described the commission's report as "peremptory, biased and silent on the role of mercenaries and their sponsors".¹³⁶ Nevertheless, it then indicated "notwithstanding these considerations, the government will respect the President of the Republic's commitment to follow up the report and all resources will be used to this end".

Several days before the publication of the report, and after a summary hearing, the N'Djamena criminal court condemned eleven rebel leaders and former President Hissène Habré to death in their absence. Those convicted were all declared guilty "of attacking the constitutional order and the integrity and security of the territory". All the rebel leaders were among those convicted: Mahamat Nouri, Timane Erdimi, Abdelwahid Aboud Mackaye, Abakar Tollimi, Djibrine Dassert, Guihini Koreï, Adouma Hassaballah, Mahamat Hanno, Acheikh Ibni Oumar, Orcheï Wardougou. These convictions indicated that the government continued to hold its opponents solely responsible for the recent events in the country, relegating any judgment on members of the regime's security services to a secondary place.

At the national level, one of the collateral victims of the February attack was Prime Minister Delwa Kasire Coumakoye. His lack of enthusiasm for the 13 August agreement ran counter to the presidential camp's desire for a political opening, not only to respond to international pressure, but also because it represented an opportunity to create an internal consensus against the rebels. In addition, the regime was hoping that the political opposition would return to the government and stop its systematic boycotts. Delwa Coumakoye had increased the procedural obstacles to implementation of the agreement because he felt it should not take place within the framework of a government of transition or union. His departure from the head of government and the creation of a commission of inquiry into the events of February represented, from the regime's point of view, concessions to the opposition.

Despite all these contentious points, the CPDC (or at least some of its members) agreed to participate in the regime's "inclusive government" at the end of April. The consensus between members of the CPDC about

their firm stance towards the regime was shattered by the departure of Delwa Coumakoye and the appointment of Youssouf Saleh Abbas as prime minister. A former vice-president of the National Sovereign Conference in 1993, vice-president of CMAP (Coordination of Armed and Political Movements)¹³⁷ and cousin of the disappeared opposition leader Ibni Oumar, he succeeded in getting four members of the CPDC to join the government: Kamougué as defence minister, Alingué as justice minister, Dahalob as minister of planning, urbanisation and habitat and Lossimian as agriculture minister. The PLD (Party for Liberty and Development) refused to participate in the government while its leader, Ibni Oumar, remained unaccounted for.¹³⁸

It is generally thought that these new ministers were not influential, because Youssouf Saleh Abbas's government remains dominated by the regime's leading figures, especially Ahmat Bachir (interior minister) and Mahamat Hissène (previously general secretary of the presidency and currently communication minister). By choosing three individuals that have had rather a low profile in recent years, namely Kamougué, Alingué and Naimbaye Lossimian, the presidential camp did not risk getting no for an answer. It counted on the fact that their desire to return to the front line of politics would be strong enough for them to ignore just how awkward their situation would be if the 13 August 2007 agreement was not implemented.

Deby is using this exercise in co-option to kindle suspicion between the CPDC's political parties. In the long term, he is aiming to break up this coalition. The real influence of the opposition's participation in the government remains subject to doubt. As anticipated, the CPDC's participation in the government paved the way for its return to the monitoring committee on 5 May 2008 and therefore put the 13 August agreement

identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice" (p. 132). "Rapport de la commission d'enquête sur les événements survenus au Tchad du 28 janvier au 8 février 2008 et leurs conséquences".

¹³⁶"Note d'analyse du rapport de la commission d'enquête sur les événements survenus au Tchad du 28 janvier au 8 février 2008 et leurs conséquences".

¹³⁷ Merger of armed movements opposed to the Deby regime, disappeared since the death of Youssouf Togoïmi, President of the MDJT (Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad).

¹³⁸ In addition, other members of the opposition, such as Salibou Garba and Saleh Kebzabo, announced that they did not personally believe in the opening of the regime and that the government was only engaged in one more manoeuvre to divide the opposition. Kebzabo also said that four members of the opposition in the government was not very much given the importance of the CPDC. He also fears that offering the posts of defence and justice was a trap: "Although Kamougué is a general, he will find it hard to give orders, because it is Deby who appoints even the least important gendarmerie brigade. With regard to Justice, no criminal has ever been tried....Chad is the country where impunity reigns par excellence". "Quatre opposants au gouvernement", *Angola Press*, 24 April 2008.

back on the agenda. These recent developments confirm the view of international observers, who believe that the political opposition used the February crisis as another opportunity to join the government for personal rather than ideological reasons. Implementation of the 13 August agreement remains secondary, and it is difficult to imagine that all the reforms it envisaged, especially the general census of the population, can take place before the legislative elections in 2009.

This guarantees the regime an opportunity to stay in power at little cost.¹³⁹ Although the approach of coaxing the opposition to reduce its demands is for the moment a success, it is nonetheless true that the armed opposition remains on the outside, which represents a potential danger. By appointing Abbas as Prime Minister, Deby was no doubt hoping that his status as a former member of the MDJT and his ethnic origin (Ouaddaï) would help to attract the more moderate rebels. However, none of them has responded to appeals made by Abbas,¹⁴⁰ repeating that he doesn't have enough power to take genuine initiatives. Since then, his general policy statement to the National Assembly, in which he said that the organisation of a roundtable with the rebels would not guarantee stability in Chad would seem to indicate that he has given up his wish for dialogue.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹The regime made the same decision to co-opt when it broke with the World Bank at the start of September and went through a minor ministerial reshuffle on 14 September 2008. Notable was the arrival of Gatta Ngoulou (Sara Kaba from Moyen Chari) as Minister of Finance and Budget. He was secretary-general of the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) for more than ten years. After the break with the World Bank, Deby wanted to show that he was giving the financial portfolio to a technocrat who was well known by the institutions, to avoid putting an end to all relations with them. Yaya Dillo (Zaghawa) was promoted to minister of mines and energy. He was previously a secretary of state. A former member of SCUD and the RFC, he had recently joined the government (November 2007). This was interpreted as a gesture by Deby towards the Zaghawa, to isolate the Erdimi even further, especially after the RFC chief of staff, Issakha Bachar Togou, came over to the government on 18 August.

¹⁴⁰As soon as he was appointed, Abbas declared: "I will hold out my hand to the armed opposition so that, as brothers, we can find an acceptable compromise that will allow us to build our country", "New Chad PM makes peace overture, rebels sceptical", Reuters, 17 April 2008.

¹⁴¹General policy statement by Prime Minister Youssouf Saleh Abbas. See Chad government website, www.primaturetchad.org.

IV. HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES

This complex political crisis is further complicated by the humanitarian crisis in the east and, to a lesser extent, the south. Resulting from the Darfur crisis and the conflict between the Chadian and Sudanese regimes, this humanitarian crisis is also a consequence of the Chad government's inability to protect civilians and punish criminals operating in the country. While the ANT focuses on combating rebel incursions in the big towns, other areas are left without protection, placing refugees, IDPs and humanitarian workers at the mercy of armed attacks to obtain food supplies.

A. THE REFUGEES IN DARFUR

From 2004, the exodus of approximately 250,000 refugees of non-Arab origin (Zaghawa, Massalits, Furs and others) to a dozen camps along the Sudanese border significantly aggravated the crisis in Chad and formed part of a regional and humanitarian crisis that has attracted the world's attention.¹⁴² The flood of refugees increased throughout the first half of 2008, with the arrival of 12,000 new refugees fleeing renewed violence in Darfur in February following JEM's relocation to N'Djamena.¹⁴³

The presence of this number of refugees from Darfur increases the precarious position of this region, which is deprived of resources and state support for its population's needs. Like the local people, the refugees are the main victims of the region's insecurity. The issues of concern regarding the refugees are mainly: recruitment of refugees by the rebel forces,¹⁴⁴ especially children;¹⁴⁵ the use of camps as a rearguard and rest base by the rebels; distribution of arms; mines;¹⁴⁶ the

¹⁴²There are also 57,000 Central African refugees in the south and 52,030 Chad refugees in Sudan. "Action humanitaire au Tchad: faits et chiffres – Point de situation", UN, 29 July 2008; "Displaced Populations Report", OCHA regional office for Central and Eastern Africa, January-June 2008.

¹⁴³"Situation report: Humanitarian needs and response in Chad", OCHA, information bulletin, 12 February 2008.

¹⁴⁴The phenomenon of recruitment of refugees by rebel forces came to public attention in March 2006, in Bredjing and Treguine camps. This phenomenon now seems less pronounced, but most of the refugee camps continue to have close links with the Darfur rebels. "UN agency condemns forced recruitment of Sudanese refugees in Chad", UN News Centre, 31 March 2006.

¹⁴⁵See "Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Chad", UNSC, S/2008/532, 7 August 2008.

¹⁴⁶"Chad: Operations relaunched with two mobile destruction teams", Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 28 May 2008.

increase of banditry inside the camps, which also affects humanitarian workers; the impunity of the perpetrators of these attacks;¹⁴⁷ and the precarious nature of the refugee camps, which are all located near the Sudanese border.¹⁴⁸ To tackle these problems, in 2005, the UNHCR and the CNAR (National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees) created their own brigade of gendarmes (approximately 300) to ensure security in the camps and for humanitarian convoys.

The transformation of the crisis has led most observers to believe that it is the IDPs and humanitarian workers rather than the Darfur refugees who are currently at the greatest risk. Security concerns are not connected to attacks by Chad rebels or the Janjawid and are more to do with the impunity that prevails in eastern Chad, which encourages all kinds of criminal activities. The situation is aggravated by the complete decline of the Chad judicial system and the government's inability to maintain the rule of law. Unidentified bandits steal cattle and vehicles, loot humanitarian convoys and execute civilians and humanitarian workers.¹⁴⁹

According to Kingsley Amaning, the humanitarian coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Chad, "from July 2007 to June

2008, at least 111 security incidents, including seven deaths, were recorded in Chad".¹⁵⁰ The most serious recent attack on humanitarian workers was against the director of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), who was wounded by gunfire from unidentified armed men wearing military uniforms on 26 July at Abéché. According to most humanitarian agencies working in Chad, attacks reached their peak in 2008. Some humanitarian organisations have been forced to suspend their activities.¹⁵¹ Between 90,000 and 100,000 beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance operations have been affected by each suspension of activities.¹⁵²

With each attack on humanitarian workers, the Chad authorities announce they have taken measures to guarantee their security. However, acts of banditry continue. Worse still, the perpetrators of these attacks are not arrested. While the Chad authorities concentrate their efforts on the east of the country, the humanitarian agencies are also suffering attacks in the south. Because of these frequent attacks, the whole Tissi area, in the extreme south of the country, near the border with the Central African Republic, has been practically inaccessible since 2006.¹⁵³

Whatever the measures taken by the Chad authorities to combat this scourge, it is undeniable that the feeling of impunity, even invulnerability, encourages the perpetrators of these attacks to continue. The Chad authorities and rebel groups frequently deny their personnel are responsible. In the absence of investigations or trials against the perpetrators, the two camps refuse to accept responsibility for this growing insecurity. Deployment of EUFOR (see below) has helped stabilise the situation, but the two missions (EUFOR and MINURCAT) cannot really change the situation on the ground with their current mandate.

Despite the situation, the Chad government tries to lead people to believe that making the camps and humanitarian access secure combined with the transfer of camps towards the interior of the country will be enough to resolve current problems, on condition that states in the region also agree to stop their support for armed groups operating from their territory. This analysis, which ignores the deep-rooted and internal reasons for the current crisis, requires a rethink.

¹⁴⁷The UNHCR has said that due to the phenomena of impunity, so far there has been no prosecution of crimes including incidents with refugees and displaced persons. "Briefing Note: Impact of Operations", UNHCR, May 2008.

¹⁴⁸The two camps that give UNHCR the biggest cause for concern, because of their proximity to the Sudanese border, are Oure Cassoni and Am Nabak, which are practically located on the border itself. The other camps are around 50-60km from the border. With the agreement of the Chad government, UNHCR has for years been unsuccessfully trying to identify potential sites where the camps can be transferred. The Chad government proposed relocating the camps to sites 500km in the interior of the country. The provision of assistance for relocating the camps forms part of MINURCAT's mandate under UNSC Resolution 1778 (2007), S/RES/1778, but there has been no real plan to implement this resolution. Crisis Group interview, March 2008. On the other hand, "some 6,000 newly arrived refugees from Darfur were relocated from the border areas to the Kounoungo and Mile refugee camps some 200 km north-east of Abéché", "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission to the Central African Republic and Chad", UNSC, S/2008/444, 8 July 2008, para. 17.

¹⁴⁹The death of Pascal Marlinge, head of the Save the Children mission, whose convoy was ambushed at Hadjer Hadjer on 1 May, is unfortunately only one example of the attacks against humanitarian workers. At least 70 humanitarian vehicles have been looted in eastern Chad since 2005, according to Oxfam, in June 2007, "Aid stoppage called to highlight insecurity and impunity", IRIN, 2 May 2008.

¹⁵⁰*N'Djamena Hebo*, n° 1131, 4-9 August 2008.

¹⁵¹See for example, "Red Cross aid workers leave Chad after threat", Reuters, 3 July 2008.

¹⁵²*N'Djamena Hebo*, n° 1131, 4-9 August 2008.

¹⁵³*Ibid.*

B. INTER-COMMUNAL VIOLENCE AND THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED

In September 2005, for the first time since the start of the conflict, the Chadian population was attacked by Janjawid Arab militia from Sudan. This attack killed 64 people from the Dadjo ethnic group in the border village of Moudeina, in Dar Sila department and caused some displacement.¹⁵⁴ In addition, it profoundly changed the nature of the conflict in the eastern region of the country by adding an ethnic dimension and by drawing a line between Arab and non-Arab populations, as in neighbouring Darfur. These attacks continued and caused an exodus of the communities living along the border who arrived, in successive waves, at Goz Beida, capital of Dar Sila.

According to the accounts of many displaced people, the assailants were Janjawid or “Arabs on horseback” of Sudanese origin, but also included Chadians. These witnesses affirmed on several occasions that they recognised men from neighbouring Arab villages among the assailants.¹⁵⁵ Within a few months, what could have initially been considered as an inter-ethnic conflict of the type fairly common in the region, became an exodus of more than 120,000 people in the Dar Sila department alone.¹⁵⁶ It seems that certain Janjawid elements from Sudan have acted with Chadian Arab tribes to chase away Dadjo communities, a majority in this region, from their villages and occupy their land. The fact that these attacks took place at a time when Chadian rebel groups were conducting operations against the ANT suggests that these two parties co-operated and planned the attacks.¹⁵⁷

Starting in December 2006, the violence increased, with murderous Janjawid raids on Tiero and Marena

in March 2007 which left between 200 and 400 dead.¹⁵⁸ The Chad government’s response was in part to arm and train, with the assistance of rebel groups in Darfur,¹⁵⁹ a Dadjo self-defence militia. This militia, known as Toro Boro,¹⁶⁰ has undoubtedly intensified ethnic clashes and led to an open conflict between the government and the Sultan of Dar Sila, Saïd Ibrahim Mustapha, who increasingly expressed open opposition to this policy.

In January 2007, the Sultan was deposed by the government and replaced by his son. The deposed Sultan affirmed that his overthrow, the first such event in the community’s history, was due to his denunciation of the Dadjo militia. However, local officials and some members of his family claim he was deposed by his own community, which criticised the way in which he encouraged the displacement of the Dadjo from the border to Goz Beida and of not having given them any assistance. The government threatened local journalists with arrest if they met the deposed Sultan.¹⁶¹

Since then, inter-communal violence and the displacement of communities are no longer confined to Arabs and the Dadjo of Dar Sila. The rivalry between Tama and Zaghawa has grown and been aggravated by the tension between President Deby and his new supporter and defence minister, Mahamat Nour. Clashes between Tama and Zaghawa took place at Guereda and spread within Dar Sila. In May and June 2007, President Deby, concerned by the strong military presence of Nour’s FUC around the capital, decided to relocate 2,000-3,000 FUC combatants to the Goz Beida region to work with ANT units to maintain order and protect the population.¹⁶²

This unfortunate decision added to the existing conflict between the Dadjo and the Arabs another one between the Tama combatants of the FUC and the

¹⁵⁴“UNHCR concerned about Janjawid militia attacks in eastern Chad”, UNHCR, 6 June 2006.

¹⁵⁵The victims of these attacks who said that the assailants were both Chadians and Sudanese later retracted their statements and said that the Sudanese were solely responsible for the attack. At the same time, the Chad government made inquiries with the victims with the aim of making a complaint against Sudan at the International Criminal Court (ICC), Crisis Group interviews, July 2007.

¹⁵⁶There are now 178,918 internally displaced people in eastern Chad. Another 60,000 internally displaced are dispersed among the following departments: Assounga, where the border town of Adré is located (37,817), Dar Tama (870), Ouara (5,856), Djourouf Al Ahmar (7,330) and Bahr Azoum (6,902). UNHCR figures, January 2008.

¹⁵⁷Such a link between Chad rebels and the Janjawid would not be new because some people from Darfur say that the Tama rebels of the FUC sometimes cooperated with the Janjawid in Darfur. Crisis Group interview, July 2007.

¹⁵⁸“Est du Tchad: entre 200 et 400 morts dans des attaques contre deux villages”, *News Press*, 11 April 2007.

¹⁵⁹A document that was alleged to be an agreement between the JEM and Dadjo leaders circulated in 2006. This and other documentary proof were presented in 2006. Crisis Group interviews, July 2007.

¹⁶⁰Toro Boro is the name originally used to designate the Sudanese rebels in Darfur. In Chad, this name is given to Darfur rebels operating in the eastern part of the country. It is also used for the community self-defence militias created in eastern Chad.

¹⁶¹Crisis Group interviews, July 2007, March-April 2008. Several traditional chiefs said that the organisation that was supposed to represent the Dadjos at the national level was manipulated by the central government.

¹⁶²Crisis Group interviews, July 2007.

Zaghawa soldiers of the ANT¹⁶³ and led to renewed insecurity for the displaced. Finally, in October 2007, having refused to be disarmed by the ANT, several members of the FUC deserted and fled to Sudan. Fierce clashes then took place around Guereda, leaving 20 dead. The Sultan of Dar Tama, Haroun Mahamat Abdoulaye (a close relation of Mahamat Nour) and other Tama leaders were arrested on 30 November in Guereda, the same day that Nour was dismissed from his position as defence minister. There is no further news of the sultan.¹⁶⁴

Since 2007, inter-communal violence in Dar Sila has eased, and there have been no more incidents as serious as those at Tiero and Marena in March 2007 (even though tension persists and insecurity remains).¹⁶⁵ This lull is attributed to the fact that the population in most of the villages along the border where violence took place has now left. Although the Chad government recognises there is a genuine need for inter-communal reconciliation, its official line is to say that these tensions have been imported from Darfur and did not previously exist in Chad. The consequence of this line of argument is to consider that if the situation in Darfur is resolved, the clashes will automatically stop in Chad. Although this is partly true, it nonetheless remains that the arming of communities and local inter-communal rivalries will not cease without an effort to promote national reconciliation.

¹⁶³ Crisis Group interviews, July 2007. There are regular reports of clashes and skirmishes between Tama and Zaghawa around Goz Beida. However, most of the serious clashes between Tama and Zaghawa, took place at Guereda, capital of Dar Tama and a stronghold of the FUC.

¹⁶⁴ The sultan of Dar Tama is also from the same family as Ibni Oumar Saleh, missing and presumed dead after the events of February. Crisis Group interviews, March 2008.

¹⁶⁵ "Besoins et réponse humanitaires au Tchad", OCHA, information bulletin, 22 July 2008.

V. REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Current and reciprocal attempts by Chad and Sudan to destabilise each other by conducting proxy wars give the crisis in Chad a strong regional dimension. Sudan, Libya and France are the most influential external actors because of their history of intervention in Chad. The country's neighbours to the south, such as the Central African Republic, are especially affected.

A. SUDAN

It would be simplistic to view the instability in eastern Chad as simply a collateral effect of the situation in Darfur. Such a vision, widely disseminated by the Chad government, has been echoed by some members of the international community. However, the cycle of attacks and reprisals between the two countries will continue unless efforts are made to resolve not only the cause of the tension between them but also their internal crises. In fact, the most serious obstacle to the peace process in Darfur is this very failure to sufficiently take into account the regional aspects of resolving the conflict.

1. Sudanese support for the Chad rebels

Islamic practice in Sudan and Chad is directly subject to the influence and expansion of Wahhabism, imported from Saudi Arabia. Although this influence has taken on political dimensions in a triumphal, even intolerant, state-sponsored Islam in Sudan, it is more cultural in Chad, as secularism continues to prevail in the country's institutions. Among the reasons for Sudan's support for the rebellion against Deby was the desire to install a regime under Turabist influence in N'Djamena.

Since the 1960s, Sudan has always wanted to influence the regime in power in Chad. The geographical proximity of the country and the fact that all successful Chadian rebellions had come from the east has facilitated this interventionism. The east has been a kind of sanctuary for Chadian insurgents. From Tombalbaye to Hissène Habré and including Malloum and Goukouni, all Chadian presidents have at some time criticised their Sudanese counterpart for supporting the rebellions that threatened them.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ At the height of armed factionalism in Chad, between 1979 and 1982, Sudan was a major actor in inter-Chadian negotiations, using its influence with the armed groups that it financed. The Lagos agreements in 1979, which led to the creation of the GUNT, were possible thanks to the mediation of El Ni-

When he organised his own rebellion in 1990, Idriss Deby profited from the deterioration in the relations between N'Djamena and Khartoum. Sudan allowed him to establish a base on the other side of the border. The arms and funds that his troops received from Libya were transported across Sudan. Once in power, Idriss Deby strived to maintain the best possible relations with his big neighbour. It was only gradually that he rid himself of this influence, without however burning his bridges with Khartoum. He even invited President Bashir to take part in the enormous ceremony organised in October 2000 to mark Chad's entry into the oil era. It was a while before they began to get irritated with each other, but then relations became tense and finally developed into open conflict in 2003 when the war in Darfur began.

Between 2003 and 2004, Deby planned to send troops to Darfur and encourage dissidents within JEM. He was even involved in the ceasefire negotiations of April 2004.¹⁶⁷ However, he was not able to prevent those close to him, notably his brother Daoussa,¹⁶⁸ from supporting the Zaghawa cause on the other side of the border, for which he paid dearly in the form of Khartoum's support for an attempted putsch in May 2004. The declaration of a state of war with Sudan on 25 December 2005 signalled a definitive break between the two capitals.¹⁶⁹ Since then, the Sudanese regime has tried, with little success, to unite the Chadian rebels with a view to changing the regime in N'Djamena. The failure of the makeshift coalition established to attack N'Djamena in February 2008 is a good illustration of this. Even if Khartoum supports the Chadian rebellion with arms, equipment and training, its influence on the quarrels between the different groups remains limited.

2. Deby and the Darfur rebels

The Chadian president had hesitated many times before lending a hand to the Darfur rebels despite their ethnic ties. It was only in the middle of 2005¹⁷⁰ that Idriss Deby, whose regime was in danger from armed movements in Chad and in the context of pressure from his

meiry, the then Sudanese president, who convinced the FAN to take part.

¹⁶⁷ "Sudan issue brief", *Small Arms Survey*, no. 9, February 2008.

¹⁶⁸ Daoussa Deby grew up with Khalil Ibrahim, and the mothers of Khalil and Timane Deby are sisters. "Chad/Sudan: Foreign fingers", *Africa Confidential*, vol. 47, no. 9, 28 April 2006.

¹⁶⁹ "Chad/Sudan: On the frontline", *Africa Confidential*, vol. 47, no. 7, 31 March 2006.

¹⁷⁰ The attempted coup of May 2004 could therefore be explained by the dissatisfaction of the Zaghawa military with Deby's refusal to support the Darfur rebels.

close colleagues, supplied the Zaghawa rebels of Darfur with equipment and gave them the right to set up base camps in eastern Chad. The presence of these forces in Chad and their instrumentalisation by the Chad presidency has been a central element of its military and security policy during the last two years.¹⁷¹

In exchange for continuous material support and freedom of access to Chad territory,¹⁷² the Sudanese rebel groups acted as auxiliaries of the ANT in its fight against Chad rebels. The JEM and the MNRD (National Movement for Recovery and Development), reconstituted with the support of the Chad government, strengthened the ANT's operational capacities and fought at its side against the Chad rebels.¹⁷³

Some dissident factions of the SLA (Sudan Liberation Army) supported ANT in the southern part of the border area. Its men were often even confused with Chad army soldiers, whose uniform they wore.¹⁷⁴ This support for President Deby's armed forces was controversial within the Darfur rebel groups themselves, which considered Chadian support essential for their success but criticised the systematic use of their forces in the Chadian wars.¹⁷⁵ The tacit agreement linking the Darfur rebel movements to the Chad government apparently included the right of access to refugee camps, where the armed groups recruited new members and obtained food supplies without the Chadian gendarmerie and administration doing anything to stop them.¹⁷⁶ Recruitment of adolescents was frequent and sometimes encouraged by camp teachers and managers.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ In fact, the issue of the Darfur rebellion was dealt with outside the presidency, which allowed Deby to deny any personal involvement. He left responsibility for this issue with his brother Daoussa and Mahamat Ismail Chaibo, director general of the National Security Agency (ANS). Crisis Group interviews, March, July 2007. Chaibo and Hassan Borgo, both Zaghawa Kabka, created the NMRD in 2004, with deserters from the JEM.

¹⁷² Like their Chadian counterparts in El Geneina, the Darfur rebels have always benefited from freedom of movement in Abéché, sometimes even publicly wearing their military uniforms. Crisis Group interviews, March 2007, March 2008.

¹⁷³ Crisis Group interview, November 2006. At first, the JEM weakened the ANT by recruiting men from the ranks of the Chadian army in 2005. After a reversal of fortune, this situation now benefits the ANT, which needs JEM and SLA soldiers to strengthen its ranks. The most recent example of this situation was provided in February 2008 after the rebel attack.

¹⁷⁴ Crisis Group interviews, January, July 2007.

¹⁷⁵ Crisis Group interviews, February, July 2007.

¹⁷⁶ Crisis Group interviews, June 2006.

¹⁷⁷ Crisis Group interviews, children who affirmed they voluntarily joined the SLA, Dar Sila, June 2006. Several of these boys, between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, had fought with the SLA for more than two years and said they

This is why humanitarian workers appealed for better protection in the refugee camps in order to guarantee their civilian character.

The improvement of the N'Djamena regime's financial situation, coupled with Mahamat Nour going over to the government and the military lull after the Tripoli talks, meant Deby was less dependent on the support of the Darfur rebels. The agreement between the government and the rebels signed in Riyadh on 3 May 2007 purely and simply demanded the expulsion of the Sudanese rebels from Chad territory. Placed in this situation on several occasions in the past, the Chad government had never carried out its threat to expel them but the Riyadh agreement was followed by rebel group movements towards Sudanese territory.¹⁷⁸ However, armed elements of the JEM and other groups that now more or less form part of the ANT or who have lost their positions in Darfur have remained in Chad.

At the end of 2007, the situation changed with the resumption of attacks by Chad rebels. JEM (which had divided into two factions)¹⁷⁹ once again became very active, launching attacks on El Geneina from its base camps in Chad. In February 2008, JEM forces were mobilised in N'Djamena to defend Idriss Deby, who was cornered in his palace. As a reward for this support, Deby supplied military equipment and funds to JEM forces before asking them to go back to Darfur in March. Since February, JEM has in fact become a key actor in Deby's military strategy and in the survival of his regime. The reason for JEM's support for Deby is clear: the survival of the Chad president is essential for its own survival. It has therefore given direct support to Deby, or at least opposed any action aiming to destabilise him.¹⁸⁰

On 10 May 2008, strongly armed with military equipment received from Chad and Libya, JEM columns

had voluntarily joined the rebellion. They said they had the right to visit their families in the camps and to return voluntarily to the front "where they have clothes and the opportunity to kill Janjawids". They also said they had taken part in combat with Chadian rebels in Adré in July 2006.

¹⁷⁸ Khalil Ibrahim and the JEM leadership returned to Darfur; Khamees Abdallah, Abu Surrah and Khalil Abdallah went to Asmara and Ahmed Abdelshaafie left for Kampala.

¹⁷⁹ Deby allegedly deliberately encouraged dissension within the JEM, which weakened his relations with Khalil Ibrahim for some time. In fact, his strategy consisted of using the different JEM factions, one after another, in order to avoid depending on Khalil Ibrahim. Crisis Group interviews, July 2007, March 2008.

¹⁸⁰ Crisis Group interviews, Darfur rebels, N'Djamena, March 2008.

pushed deep into the interior of Sudan to attack the suburbs of Omdurman, Khartoum's twin town on the other bank of the Nile. Although it was turned back, this was an extraordinary offensive and was the first time that an armed Sudanese faction had directly threatened Khartoum. The Sudanese army's military capacity had been put in doubt. Although Chad has-tened to deny any involvement, it is undeniable that the military equipment received from Deby in "reward" for services rendered in N'Djamena, allowed JEM to carry out this masterstroke.

The Chadian president no doubt hoped that such an attack would make the Sudanese authorities understand he also was capable of counter-attacking by proxy, through the Sudanese rebellion. The Chad authorities were aware of Sudanese efforts to convince the UFDD and its allies to repeat their February attack on N'Djamena and the Chadian presidency had become alarmed about this possibility. It published on its website a transcription of telephone conversations that were alleged to have taken place between Mahamat Nouri and the Sudanese Secret Service.¹⁸¹ The verbal escalation and the break in diplomatic relations following the JEM attack showed that the two regimes wanted to intensify their support for the rebellions against their respective counterpart.

3. The peace accords between Chad and Sudan

Until now, attempts to resolve the conflict between Chad and Sudan have been limited to a series of non-aggression pacts supervised by countries that are not especially able or willing to ensure they are implemented. Libya has generally taken the initiative but does not have the capacity required to make the two countries respect their commitments. Gaddafi was particularly irritated when Saudi Arabia got involved in resolving the conflict between Chad and Sudan by making them sign a peace agreement in May 2007. However, even though Deby and Bashir prayed together in Mecca, they did not feel they had to honour their commitments. The most recent agreement

¹⁸¹ The Chadian presidency's website, www.presidentetchad.org, published transcripts of "telephone conversations" that supposedly took place between the head of the Sudanese intelligence services, Salah Gosh, and Mahamat Nouri. In these unauthenticated exchanges on 19 and 20 March, Gosh called on Nouri to "move" quickly against President Deby. "Attack quickly. Do it quickly, quickly", says Salah Gosh. "Of course", replies General Nouri. Abderahman Koulamalah said that these transcripts "do not hold water", although he conceded that there were telephone contacts between General Nouri and Salah Gosh. See "Un chef rebelle exhorte le gouvernement tchadien à reconnaître la réalité de la rébellion", Agence France-Presse, 12 March 2008.

between Chad and Sudan, the sixth in five years, was signed in mid-march in Dakar, right in the middle of the resumption of mutual accusations of aggression.¹⁸²

What was new in this agreement¹⁸³ was the creation of a contact group chaired by Congo Brazzaville and Libya to supervise its implementation. International observers are authorised to participate in this group,¹⁸⁴ which brings together the foreign affairs ministers on a monthly basis.¹⁸⁵ The main point regarding the implementation of this new agreement is the establishment of an African buffer force on the border, an idea that had been previously raised by the Tripoli agreement. It also added the creation of eight border control posts in addition to the two already agreed.¹⁸⁶ Libya announced it would finance this force to the tune of \$2 million, while Senegal and Congo Brazzaville agreed to provide the troops.¹⁸⁷

The issue of coordinating this force with MINURCAT/EUFOR (Chad) and UNAMID (Sudan) is still not very clear, nor is it clear how these different forces might help each other. The UN and EU security experts initially invited to help the contact group to organise

and deploy this force have been asked by Libya to stay away, officially because the regional powers do not want external involvement.¹⁸⁸ All the efforts to establish this force as well as all the hopes raised by the Dakar agreement were seriously called into question after the JEM offensive on Khartoum on 10 May 2008. Sudan described the JEM combatants as mercenaries and immediately cut off diplomatic relations with N'Djamena.¹⁸⁹ Despite attempts to calm things down, it is to be feared that the rainy season will serve only for preparations for new offensives in October or November 2008.

Moreover, the prospect of the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor's office indicting the Sudanese president for the crime of genocide in Darfur can only strengthen the international position of Deby and his JEM allies. The more that the international community outlaws President Bashir, the more that Deby will feel comfortable and free to provide military and financial support to the Darfur rebel attacks on Khartoum and the interior of Sudan.

B. LIBYA

The Libyan government's priorities have remained relatively constant over the course of time,¹⁹⁰ even though the means to achieve them have changed: oppose foreign influence in general and Western influence in particular, while extending its own sphere of influence.¹⁹¹ Libya now plays a more political than military role. In recent years, it has posed as the mediator par excellence between Chad and Sudan. Fearing more than anything else an internationalisation of the conflict, the consequence of which would be an increase in non-African forces in the region, it increased its efforts to promote peace.¹⁹² In view of the break in

¹⁸² "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad", UNSC, S/2008/444, 8 July 2008. "Letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council", UNSC, S/2008/216, 1 April 2008. "Letter dated 1 April 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Chad addressed to the President of the Security Council", UNSC, S/2008/222, 4 April 2008. See www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.gIKWLeMTIsG/b.2897757/.

¹⁸³ The main provisions of the agreement were: 1. normalise relations between Sudan and Chad; 2. reiterate respect for commitments previously adopted; 3. create a contact group; and 4. promise to prohibit any activity by armed groups and prevent their respective territories being used for the purposes of destabilisation.

¹⁸⁴ As stipulated in the 13 March agreement, "the Dakar contact group" includes: Chad, Sudan, Eritrea, Gabon, Libya, Republic of Congo, Senegal (the last 5 countries act as mediators mandated by the African Union and accepted by Chad and Sudan), the African Union (represented by the president of the Commission of the AU), CEN-SAD, OIC (Organisation of the Islamic Conference), of which Chad and Sudan are members, the UN and the EU. Moreover, the Dakar Agreement also designates France, the UK and U.S. as belonging to the "group of friends of the Dakar Agreement" and thus can take part in the "contact group" meetings.

¹⁸⁵ The group met in Libreville on 24 April, Tripoli on 12 May (in the absence of Sudan), Brazzaville on 9 June, Dakar on 10 July and Asmara on 14 September.

¹⁸⁶ "Sudan, Chad endorse plan to monitor joint border", *Sudan Tribune*, 29 April 2008.

¹⁸⁷ "Sudan Chad contact group decides to deploy border monitors", *Sudan Tribune*, 11 April 2008.

¹⁸⁸ Crisis Group interview, foreign diplomat, Brussels, May 2008.

¹⁸⁹ Chad and Sudan decided to restore diplomatic relations on 1 August 2008. "Sudan and Chad agree to restore diplomatic relations", *Sudan Tribune*, 2 August 2008.

¹⁹⁰ For a detailed account of Chad-Libya relations, see Crisis Group Report, *Chad: Back Towards War?*, op. cit.

¹⁹¹ On his arrival in power, Colonel Gaddafi aspired to create an Arab empire covering the whole region. Military intervention and support for certain rebel groups were at that time the methods he used to assert his influence on the continent. In the 1990s, weakened by international sanctions against his regime, his resulting bad reputation as well as by past debacles, Gaddafi decided to change his strategy. He reoriented his foreign policy towards the whole of the African continent rather than focusing only to Arab countries.

¹⁹² It is from this perspective that Gaddafi's opposition to the deployment of EUFOR and MINURCAT can be understood.

diplomatic relations between the two countries, President Gaddafi has succeeded in imposing himself as the representative of Chad's interests in Sudan and Sudan's interests in Chad. Strengthened by this situation, he now seems opposed to any other leader getting involved in relations between the two countries.

It is in Chad that this mediator role has become most important. The Libyan leader has always considered the country as being in his backyard, his exclusive domain.¹⁹³ President Gaddafi has therefore gradually imposed himself as someone who cannot be ignored in relation to resolving the conflicts in which Chad is involved, whether they are internal or international conflicts, especially with the Sudan. The Libyan leader has indeed sponsored three peace agreements involving the Chad government.¹⁹⁴ In addition to the agreements that have been signed, Gaddafi has made many attempts to bring Sudan and Chad together and orchestrated similar moves between the Chad government and the rebel groups.

Gaddafi for instance played the role of mediator at the time of the rebel attacks in February and June 2008. In February, he was mandated by the AU to mediate between the Chad government and the rebel groups that tried to take N'Djamena.¹⁹⁵ In June, it was the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) that asked the rebels to prioritise dialogue with the government, under the auspices of President Gaddafi.¹⁹⁶ In May, President Deby himself appealed to the Libyan leader to continue his mediation efforts with Sudan.

Although Libyan influence cannot be ignored, both because of Gaddafi's role and its considerable financial weight, the real impact of the Libyan leader is

nevertheless questionable. President Gaddafi often succeeds in getting all the actors in the conflict around the same table but the agreements that result from these meetings are rarely implemented. He therefore has the weight to bring the belligerents together, but much less capacity to radically influence their actions. After the signature of the Syrte Agreements, the UFDD president, Nouri, said, in a way that symbolised the relations between the rebels and President Gaddafi, that he was not convinced but signed, "to please the Libyan leader who was putting pressure on us". "Material" advantages are also mentioned by the press.¹⁹⁷

After years of hostility, France and Libya are now working together in Chad. Proof of this was given in February 2008 during the rebel attack on N'Djamena.¹⁹⁸ France and Libya therefore seem to have a common interest in preventing Chad from falling into rebel hands. Neither France nor Libya wants a regime in N'Djamena that is dependent on Khartoum. While France says it wants to avoid regional destabilisation, Gaddafi does not want to see Mahamat Nouri, supported by the Sudanese, take power.

Gaddafi harbours a long-held distrust towards Nouri.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, Nouri's Gorane origin, like Hissène Habré, strengthens this distrust even more. For Libya, a Gorane as head of state would mean losing the influence it currently exercises in the north of Chad, close to the border between the two countries. The region is indeed relatively neglected by Deby, which leaves Libya a significant margin of manoeuvre. Moreover, the opposition between Nouri and Gaddafi is strengthened by the links that Nouri maintains with the Saudi Arabian regime. The hostility between Libya and Saudi Arabia

¹⁹³ Robert Buijtenhuijs, "Chad in the age of the warlords", op. cit.

¹⁹⁴ The first agreement, known as the "Tripoli Agreement", was signed by the Chad government and the rebel leader Mahamat Nour on 8 February 2006. The second was the "agreement between the Republic of Chad and the FUC" and was signed in Tripoli on 24 December 2006. The third was the "Syrte Agreement", signed by the Chad government and the four main rebel groups in eastern Chad on 25 October 2007.

¹⁹⁵ The outgoing president of the Commission of the African Union, Alpha Oumar Konaré, had this to say about this choice: "You need to look at the evidence: if he is sidelined, there would be no negotiations. The Libyan leader is in contact with all the actors in the crisis. He therefore has more cards in his hand. Leaving him out of the game means closing some doors". It should be noted that this mandate was quickly tinged with irony when it transpired that the Libyan leader had participated in a manoeuvre that aimed to transfer ammunition to government troops.

¹⁹⁶ Colonel Gaddafi is a permanent peace mediator for CEN-SAD.

¹⁹⁷ "4 Questions à Monsieur Lyadish Ahmed Idriss, Commentateur de la politique tchadienne", *Tchad Forum*, 25 December 2007, www.tchadforum.com/node/473. Libya apparently offered a significant sum of money to the Erdimi brothers, leaders of the RFC, to join the government. Crisis Group interview, N'Djamena, August 2008.

¹⁹⁸ Faced with the danger to Deby, France organised the delivery of munitions to the Chad army through the intermediary of Libya. These munitions were used by the Russian T-55 tanks, which were of crucial importance in defending the presidential palace. On this subject, see the article by Laurent d'Ersu and Jean-Christophe Ploquin, "La France a permis à Idriss Deby de sauver son régime" in *La Croix*, 8 February 2008. This was the first article in the French press to reveal the details of this arrangement.

¹⁹⁹ Nouri fought at the side of Hissène Habré, who defeated Libyan troops in 1987. Moreover, Habré and Nouri were close for many years, during which time they did not cease fighting Libyan forces. Nouri was appointed as a minister in Habré's government in 1982 before going over to Deby after his Libyan-supported putsch in 1990.

therefore strengthens the Libyan president's support for Idriss Deby and his desire to prevent the rebels taking power.²⁰⁰

Libya plays a difficult game in Chad, manoeuvring between the Chad authorities, the Sudanese government and the rebels in both camps. While maintaining close links with the Sudanese regime, Libya openly supports certain Sudanese rebel groups, such as JEM.²⁰¹ There is the same duality with regard to Chad. Although Libya supports the regime, it also seems to support the rebels who oppose it.²⁰² President Gaddafi therefore conducts a balancing act between the different rebel groups and governments in order to preserve his influence in the region and have the means to put pressure on the various actors.

C. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Although there are many inter-linkages between the Chadian and the CAR crises, the two countries are not in conflict. There is a genuine community of interests between the two regimes, related to Chad's military assistance to the CAR and the shared feeling that they both have much to fear from Sudan. Apparently the weakest of the three, the CAR nevertheless finds it difficult to position itself in this trio, torn between the need to avoid irritating its Chadian sponsor and its interest in normalising relations with Khartoum.

The success of General Bozizé's coup against the regime of Ange Félix Patassé, in March 2003, owed much to President Deby's military support.²⁰³ Relations between Chad and Patassé's regime began to deteriorate in 1999 until they reached the point of no return at the

beginning of 2003, despite many attempts at mediation. Deby accused his counterpart of supporting the southern rebellion led by Laokein Barde Frisson, to which Patassé responded that Deby was the instigator of successive military strikes against his regime. Finally, the Chad president put members of his presidential guard at Bozizé's disposal and their participation was decisive in the capture of Bangui.

Having got rid of Patassé, Chad maintained a military presence in Bangui, officially to ensure the stability of the CAR and as part of the CEMAC peace force. In fact, the presence of about a hundred Zaghawa soldiers from the Chadian presidential guard ensures the survival of the Bozizé regime and even the personal security of Bozizé himself. In addition, Chad deployed its armed forces along the border between the two countries, in order to neutralise the activities of Chadian and CAR rebel groups operating in the area.

In the context of new rebel offensives against N'Djamena, President Deby was forced to withdraw his forces at the end of 2005 and redeploy them in eastern Chad. This retreat considerably weakened the military capacity of the Bangui regime, which found itself very quickly submerged by the rebellion in the north east. Conscious of Sudan's support for this rebellion, President Bozizé knew it was imperative to normalise relations with Khartoum and moderate his alliance with Chad. Sudan put forward three conditions: visit Khartoum to sign a separate peace treaty; reopen the border with Sudan, which had been closed in solidarity with Chad; and deploy a mixed force on the border of the two countries. On several occasions, the CAR president was tempted to accept these conditions, but he was vetoed by President Deby, who threatened to withdraw his military support. Although Bozizé went to Khartoum in August 2007, he only did so because of the lull in relations between Chad and Sudan at that time.

These episodes show that the Chad regime includes the CAR in its overall military survival strategy. First, in the context of the dispatch of an international force to stabilise the area around the three borders (and therefore reduce the freedom of action of the rebel groups), Chad needs CAR support for its views as a counterweight to Khartoum's opposition to this presence. Second, N'Djamena wants to perpetuate its right of pursuit into CAR's territory in order to stop rebels setting up bases in southern Chad where the oil production zone is located.²⁰⁴ Third, it follows from this

²⁰⁰Gaddafi is in fact hostile to any Saudi initiative in the region. For example, it would seem that after the signature of the Riyadh Agreement, relations between Deby and Gaddafi temporarily cooled.

²⁰¹For example, the Chad opposition press reported that, in June 2008, President Deby explicitly asked Libya to supply arms to the JEM. The rebel attack in February 2008 seems to have strengthened the links between the JEM rebels and Gaddafi. The latter did not appreciate President Bashir's support for the Chadian rebels. The events of February allegedly provoked a significant break between the Libyan and Sudanese leaders. However, the break with the Sudanese regime is not total.

²⁰²Symbolically, the former FUC leader, who became the defence minister, Mahamat Nour Abdelkarim, found refuge in the Libyan embassy in Chad in November 2007 after being dismissed by President Deby.

²⁰³On relations between Chad and the Central African Republic and episodes prior to Bozizé's coup, see Crisis Group Report, *Central African Republic*, op. cit.

²⁰⁴From this point of view, the CAR army's weakness is in Chad's interests because it can use this fact as a legitimate reason for the presence of the ANTF forces on CAR territory to ensure the security of the unprotected civilian population

that although Bozizé needs a militarily strong Deby to survive, it is not certain that the latter really wants to strengthen his CAR ally. On the contrary, it seems that Bozizé's heavy dependence on it for security is a necessary element of the strategy of the Chad regime, which wants to avoid finding itself isolated and facing a Khartoum/Bangui axis.

D. AFRICAN UNION

African Union (AU) involvement is essentially due to the violence in Darfur and its consequences for the sub-region and has not really extended to the internal Chad crisis for two main reasons. The AU generally agrees with the Chad government's rhetoric that claims this crisis is a straightforward attempt by assorted armed bands from nowhere in particular to overthrow a legal and elected government. From this point of view, the AU feels it is contrary to the AU Charter to get involved in negotiations that include Chad rebels. The final communiqué of the 138th meeting of the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) was clear on this point. Condemning the attacks of 11 June 2008 by "armed groups on Chad territory" the PSC reaffirmed its complete rejection of any attempts to take power by unconstitutional means, because that would represent a violation of the AU's constitutive act.²⁰⁵

The Chad rebellion is therefore not very inclined to trust an African body grouping heads of state suspected of having a "natural solidarity" with their counterpart, Idriss Deby. Although the Chadian government is satisfied with the AU's solidarity, it is not certain it wants the permanent involvement of African organisations as this could provide an opportunity for inappropriate external interference in Chad's national affairs. On this point at least, there is a consensus between the Chadian protagonists, who seem to have a com-

mon "utilitarian" vision of the AU's involvement.²⁰⁶ Moreover, Deby distrusts the balance of power in the AU, which he suspects of being on Sudan's side.²⁰⁷ Because of these obstacles, AU action has so far been limited to statements expressing the "serious concern" of African leaders and urging the different Chadian parties to engage in dialogue. It was necessary to wait for the events of February before the AU mandated the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi and the Congolese Sassou Nguesso as permanent mediators in the Chadian crisis.

The deterioration in relations between Chad and Sudan has led the AU to play the role of mediator to avoid a direct confrontation between the two countries that could harm the process of African integration. The AU has taken the initiative on several occasions, with both Alpha Oumar Konaré and his successor as the head of the AU Commission, Jean Ping shuttling between N'Djamena and Khartoum. Their agenda consists of trying to convince the two sides to stop supporting their respective rebels but they have not had a lot of success. However, these efforts bore fruit with the Dakar Agreement between Deby and Bashir in March 2008, obtained after the mediation of the Senegalese president, Abdoulaye Wade, mandated by the AU. In fact, the AU is gambling that the crucial issue in the sub-region is the resolution of the Darfur crisis. From this point of view, the Chadian crisis is seen at best as a collateral effect of Darfur and at worst an attempt to destabilise a legally elected government by armed bands encouraged by the AU to put down their weapons and return to the democratic game.

against bandits. However, ANT's contribution to the struggle against armed bands operating in northern CAR has been disputed. Most reports by humanitarian organisations present in the area say that many of these bands are of Chadian origin and their weapons come from Chad army arsenals. Although the hypothesis that ANT uses these bands to maintain insecurity in the north of CAR has not yet been verified, it is nevertheless the case that their protection by the local authorities (Chad and CAR) has been denounced on several occasions. See "State of anarchy, rebellion and abuses against civilians in the north of the Central African Republic", Human Rights Watch, September 2007.

²⁰⁵ See "Communiqué final à l'issue de la conférence des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement africains à Charm El Cheikh", AU, 3 July 2008.

²⁰⁶ President Deby frequently criticises the AU, which he accuses of doing nothing against external aggression against Chad. The rebel chiefs have complained several times about the statements made by the former president of the AU Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, who described their struggle as "from another era". Statement by Alpha Oumar Konaré after the FUC rebel attack on N'Djamena in April 2006.

²⁰⁷ Crisis Group interview, Chadian minister, April 2008.

VI. MINURCAT AND EUFOR – CHAD/CAR

A. MINIMUM SERVICE

In August 2006, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1706 on the “establishment of a multi-dimensional presence consisting of political, humanitarian, military and civilian police liaison officers in key locations in Chad, including in internally displaced persons and refugee camps”. This resolution ignored the internal humanitarian and political dimensions of the Chad crisis and directly linked the difficulties in the east of the country with the Darfur conflict.

Resolution 1706 illustrated the triple desire of the Chadian, Sudanese and Libyan governments to refuse any international military presence in this part of Chad. Libya considered that the provisions of the Tripoli Agreement were enough to guarantee the security and protection of refugees.²⁰⁸ Sudan remained fiercely opposed to any strong UN military presence because it felt that this would open the way for the intervention of a rapid reaction force in Darfur if one was required. President Deby, reticent about any United Nations involvement in Chad’s internal affairs, and fearing a “Congolese” development of the process, that is, a military deployment accompanied by an obligation to open an inclusive internal dialogue under international control, quickly opposed the idea of a multinational force in eastern Chad.²⁰⁹

After the Secretary-General’s report in February 2007 and another refusal by Deby, the French government finally put forward the idea of deploying a European force in eastern Chad, the backbone of which would be provided by France. This argument convinced Idriss Deby, who approved the dispatch of this force in September.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ After the Tripoli Agreement, there were some attempts to deploy forces along the border. Some Burkina soldiers arrived in Abéché in 2006, expecting to be deployed, but they left because the financial support promised by Libya did not arrive. Another plan was set up in 2007, which consisted of the deployment of a quadripartite observation force (Chad, Sudan, Libya, Eritrea). In fact, only a few Libyan and Eritrean soldiers under the banner of the AU arrived in El Geneina and Adré. Crisis Group interviews, July 2006, March, July 2007.

²⁰⁹ It seems that President Deby was also subjected to Libyan pressure asking him to oppose such a force. Crisis Group interviews, July 2007.

²¹⁰ Letter S/2007/540 dated 11 September 2007. Deby felt more at ease with a force in which his French ally predominated.

UN Resolution 1778²¹¹ therefore established a rather original UN peacekeeping operation as it provided for two forces of different origins and characteristics, not supported by any really political mandate. In the field, the two forces were to combine efforts: 300 UN police officers and 50 military liaison officers (MINURCAT) and the EU force (EUFOR) composed of 3,700 men.²¹² MINURCAT was also innovative in comparison to its usual protection rules, because the mission would depend on a foreign force for its own security.

According to this resolution, the UN presence was “to help create the security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons, on the one hand, and on the other to contribute to the monitoring and to the promotion and protection of human rights and of the rule of law”. Within this framework, MINURCAT deploys in the refugee camps and on the sites where displaced persons are concentrated, and ensures training of the Integrated Security Detachment (DIS, formerly known as the Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection)²¹³ which will remain under Chadian command but which the UN considers as its own concept. It also contributes to monitoring and promoting human rights and helps the Chadian government to strengthen its judicial system and the rule of law. Equipped with a mandate under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, EUFOR contributes to the protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and IDPs, facilitates the transport of humanitarian aid and the free circulation of humanitarian personnel and protects UN personnel deployed by its agencies and MINURCAT.

Delayed by the February 2008 attack, MINURCAT and EUFOR had a difficult start in Chad. While EUFOR prepared to begin its deployment on 12 February, MINURCAT found it difficult to finalise the status-of-mission agreement with the Chadian government,

²¹¹ UNSC Resolution 1778 (2007), S/RES/1778.

²¹² In July 2008, the contributions of countries to the force were as follows: Albania 63, Austria 177, Belgium 108, Bulgaria 2, Cyprus 2, Czech Republic 2, European Union 1, Finland 60, France 1671, Germany 4, Greece 4, Hungary 3, Ireland 408, Italy 90, Lithuania 2, Luxembourg 2, Netherlands 67, Poland 299, Portugal 2, Romania 2, Slovakia 1, Slovenia 15, Spain 84, Sweden 174, United Kingdom 4. See www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Force_Stenght_by_Nations_in_AOO.pdf.

²¹³ Although the final resolution does not give their exact number, it is envisaged that 850 men will be trained and deployed. Most of these men will come from the ranks of the Chadian gendarmes who are already working with the UNHCR within the framework of the National Commission to Support Refugees. Crisis Group interviews, N’Djamena, Abéché, March 2008.

which was finally signed on 21 March.²¹⁴ A National Coordination of Support for the Deployment of the International Force in Eastern Chad (CONAFIT), a governmental institution given responsibility for supporting the international forces in the implementation of their mandate and of organising the aid provided by the international community²¹⁵ was created by the Chadian government and slowed down the process. It reports directly to the president. Although relations between the government and the UN are reportedly good,²¹⁶ the selection of police officers and gendarmes for the DIS was very slow, which, added to the usual slowness of all UN deployments, seriously delayed operations in the field, which hampered task sharing between EUFOR and MINURCAT and, above all, was detrimental to the civilian population and humanitarian actors.²¹⁷

B. THE NEED FOR A NEW MANDATE

The two missions now find themselves facing a changed security situation that they are having difficulty dealing with. The political discussions and deployment took so long that the situation in the field already requires another mandate. The mid-term review should allow the missions to adjust to the new environment, but the gaps in their mandate are already clearly visible from the operational point of view.

First, the security situation has changed in that the main danger is no longer attacks from armed groups but an increasingly generalised banditry. Neither MINURCAT nor EUFOR are mandated to confront bandits on the highway. MINURCAT operations are restricted to camps and sites and do not cover the whole of the affected territory. However, criminality is not limited to

the camps and does not only emanate from activities within the sites. Moreover, MINURCAT was late in deploying, while EUFOR, which does not have a gendarmerie force, finds itself confronted with a situation for which it has not been prepared. Its task is to make the areas surrounding the sites/camps and the areas of return secure against the military threat (premeditated military attacks by armed groups) and not to maintain order (banditry, theft and criminality).

Second, EUFOR does not have the formal authority to deal with the Sudanese or Chadian rebels.²¹⁸ As was highlighted in the last Secretary-General's report, "EUFOR and MINURCAT are not in a position to directly address the problem of cross-border movement by armed groups".²¹⁹ However, it is these movements and the clashes with the armed forces that make the region unstable and promote a climate of insecurity. The two missions deal with the consequences of the insecurity but not the causes.

Finally, despite some responsibility for human rights and supporting the government with the justice system, neither of the forces is mandated to confront the underlying causes of the crisis. As in other conflicts, the peacekeeping missions are only a dressing on a wound and do nothing to treat the illness. This costly approach risks endangering the little success that MINURCAT and EUFOR can have in one year in Chad. In the end, the outcome will be the consolidation of the EU and UN presence in eastern Chad, but it will not really change the security situation.²²⁰

The international community must realise that the crisis in Chad needs a comprehensive strategy to resolve the panoply of problems that the country faces. Even the lasting return of refugees and IDPs (the heart of the current mandate) seems hardly possible without a profound restructuring of the Chadian state, institutions and system of governance. Only such a reorganisation and the creation of a genuine democratic consensus can guarantee an end to impunity, corruption and the clan-based politics that are the real reasons for the internal crisis. To mandate MINURCAT "in the promotion of the rule of law, including through support for an independent judiciary and a strengthened legal system" without placing this task within a larger framework of institutional and administrative reform seems doomed

²¹⁴The Chad authorities have for a long time wanted this basic agreement to make a precise reference to the modalities of implementation of the policing dimension of the UN operations in order to link their agreement on the deployment of MINURCAT to an agreement on the modalities of exercise of the PTPH (Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection). However, the UN was seeking to decouple the two issues to avoid disagreements on this aspect of the mission compromising the status of the mission as a whole. In the end, the Chad authorities agreed to sign the version proposed by the UN.

²¹⁵Decree no. 896/PR/2007 of 7 November 2007, on the creation, organisation and attributions of the National Coordination of Support for the International Force in Eastern Chad (CONAFIT).

²¹⁶Crisis Group interviews, UN and government officials, N'Djamena, March-April 2008.

²¹⁷The presidential decree creating the DIS has not yet been signed. Crisis Group telephone interview, September 2008.

²¹⁸Alex de Waal, "Making sense of Chad", *Monthly Review*, 4 February 2008.

²¹⁹"Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad", UNSC, S/2008/444, 8 July 2008, para. 52.

²²⁰"Consolidated appeal for Chad. Mid-Year Review", United Nations, 16 July 2008.

to failure. If the EU/UN intervention is going to make a difference to the Chadian people, the Security Council must show more political courage in encouraging the Chadian regime to define political solutions that are acceptable to the whole Chadian political class.

Despite these obstacles, there is formidable European pressure, especially from France, to achieve measurable results. At the beginning of its mission, EUFOR seemed to focus on one aspect of its mandate, which asked it to create security conditions that would promote a lasting and voluntary return of refugees, IDPs and civilians in danger and the conditions for social reconstruction and economic development.²²¹ Seen from this angle, EUFOR is able to measure its results through an exact count of the displaced people who have returned home.²²² This approach has been severely criticised by humanitarian workers. Although they recognise that the limited return of displaced people is an encouraging sign, they nevertheless fear that the conditions for voluntary and lasting return have not been created.²²³ They convinced EUFOR that its approach was detrimental to the displaced population and also to EUFOR's own image.²²⁴ It is to be feared that the departure of EUFOR will be accompanied by a resurgence of insecurity if the political climate does not improve.²²⁵

EUFOR also carries the scars of its creators, notably France. Many European countries, especially Germany and the UK, were reluctant to contribute to a force that would be seen as an extension of Operation Epervier. The death, at the beginning of March, of a soldier of the French special forces, who entered Sudan (by crossing the very sensitive border area of Sudan/Chad/CAR) strengthened the doubts of other European countries and the suspicions of Sudan.²²⁶ There are both positive and negative aspects of the considerable French contribution to EUFOR. Although

it is true that the French nature of this force poses a problem in terms of perception (and also action), it is nonetheless the case that EUFOR would not have been able to deploy so quickly were it not for the availability of the troops, intelligence and information that only the French army could provide. The true test of its neutrality in relation to French policy and Operation Epervier was always going to be a clash with the Chadian rebels when defending the civilian population.

In mid-June 2008, the Irish forces of EUFOR encountered Chadian rebel fire during the rebel attack on Goz Beida. Although it seems that an exchange of fire took place, the Irish soldiers remained neutral. After this incident, the Chadian president publicly inquired as to the purpose of EUFOR, saying that it was incapable of protecting civilians.²²⁷ It seems that the Chadian army was expecting EUFOR to defend Goz Beida and the surrounding area, where IDPs were living, against the rebel attack, which did not happen. During this incident, EUFOR evacuated many humanitarian workers, but the rebels nevertheless looted several of their premises.

EUFOR is conceived as a transitional mission to prepare the ground for a comprehensive peacekeeping mission. If the Security Council does not take responsibility for equipping the mission with a sufficiently robust mandate to join the government in confronting the challenges in Chad, EUFOR's work risks being compromised. Only a global solution dealing with all aspects of the Chadian crisis can make the region secure and bring lasting peace. If EUFOR Chad/RCA is a success, it will be a success for Europe. If it fails, more than anything else, it will be a French failure. The Elysée and the Quai d'Orsay know this. It is this lever that the member states of the EU must pull to get France to fulfil its commitment to changing its policy in Africa.

²²¹ UNSC Resolution 1778 (2007), S/RES/1778, para. 1.

²²² Note that such a count would anyway not give an exact idea of the reality, for it is well-known that during the rainy season (period when there is a lull in fighting), some internally displaced people go back to their villages to cultivate their fields. It is not excluded that they make the return journey in the dry season for fear of more fighting.

²²³ From this perspective, the humanitarian community, in close cooperation with the government, has developed a strategic framework for the voluntary return of people displaced in May 2008. See "Action humanitaire au Tchad: faits et chiffres. Point de situation", OCHA, 29 July 2008.

²²⁴ Crisis Group telephone interviews, September 2008.

²²⁵ Crisis Group interviews, EUFOR, humanitarian agencies, March-April 2008.

²²⁶ "Tension entre Paris et Khartoum après la disparition d'un soldat français", *Le Monde*, 6 March 2008.

²²⁷ "Le Tchad dénonce 'la passivité' de l'EUFOR", *PANA*, 18 June 2008.

VII. A NEW CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

A. THE NEED FOR GENUINE POLITICAL PROCESS

After the events of February, the Chadian political opposition and armed groups have renewed their appeal for a wide-ranging and inclusive dialogue involving all actors in the Chad crisis. The government, supported by France, the EU and the U.S., opposes such a roundtable. The government maintains it would be contrary to the Chadian constitution to organise a dialogue between an elected president and armed rebels who have tried to overthrow him by force. Moreover, there are those who insist that the Chadian rebellion only exists because of the support of the Sudanese regime.²²⁸ If the armed opposition wants to participate in the comprehensive peace process, it says, it should first agree to be disarmed, form legal political parties and join the 13 August political platform. Outside these three conditions the only dialogue possible with the rebels should be done separately, as with the Syrte Agreement.²²⁹

Such reasoning is, to say the least, disconnected from reality (and counterproductive) for several reasons. First, no armed rebellion will accept being disarmed prior to negotiations. Second, even though it is true that Khartoum manipulates the rebellion, that does not justify completely ignoring the rebellion's demands. Close examination of these demands shows they are legitimate in many respects and are similar to those of unarmed opponents. Third, the separate dialogue between the government and armed groups has so far only resulted in short-term agreements, consisting of demobilisation, amnesty, allocation of positions with responsibilities and co-option.

The experience of the agreement with Mahamat Nour's FUC clearly showed the illusory nature of such a process. Moreover, although Aldjineidi is currently a member of the government, most of his troops have refused to be disarmed and have preferred to rejoin the rebellion. Finally, the legitimacy claimed by President Deby is itself questionable as he was re-elected in a process of debatable democratic character.

²²⁸ According to this point of view, the FUC rebellion would be the only authentic one, because it results from a genuinely "internal" bone of contention between the Tama and the Zaghawa. Crisis Group interview, a diplomat, N'Djamena, March 2008.

²²⁹ Crisis Group interviews, diplomats, March-April 2008.

The current situation is favourable to dialogue, but if nothing is done, this window of opportunity risks closing. Since their entry into the new government in April, opposition leaders have moderated their call for an inclusive dialogue. As we have seen in the past, the opposition prioritises short-term political considerations and personal ambition rather than seeking more wide-ranging goals. It ignores the rebellion when the latter is in retreat. On the other hand, it claims the rebels are essential interlocutors when they seem to be in a menacing position. The strategic dimensions of these calculations are understandable: the opposition does not want to find itself marginalised in any eventual comprehensive dialogue. It therefore prefers to be realistic by negotiating with the regime in the hope of including its own demands on the agenda of negotiations in addition to those raised by the rebellion. However, as we have seen with the 13 August agreement, the major beneficiary of this game is the government, which uses it to reassert its legitimacy.

It is not certain at this moment that the rebellion is as weak as some claim. The series of attacks at the beginning of June 2008 showed its capacity to act remained intact. Moreover, far from being a debacle, its failure in February was more due to French intervention and a lack of internal coordination than military defeat. The balance of forces seems more than ever to be frozen. Having only a fragile political basis, and external Sudanese and French military support, Deby's regime is at the mercy of changes in alliances. Entrenched in N'Djamena, the Chadian presidency can not eternally manage the country by arresting or co-opting opponents or military recoveries in extremis. To ensure the permanence of its interests and those of its most faithful supporters, and to avoid a tragic end, Deby has an interest in making concessions to both armed and unarmed opponents and accepting the reconstruction of a democratic state that would guarantee him a peaceful future.

It is therefore essential to create a new framework for solving the Chadian crisis and its regional dimensions. This approach must integrate the different negotiating initiatives into a single process under the responsibility of a single mediator. Currently, the process involving the government and the political opposition is supervised by the EU; the contacts between the government and the armed groups are managed (occasionally) by Libya; finally, the negotiations between Chad and Sudan are under the responsibility of a regional contact group created by the Dakar Agreement. From crisis to crisis, this compartmentalised approach only benefits the presidency, who attracts individuals to his side without tackling grassroots reforms.

In view of the current balance of forces, it would be illusory to believe that a roundtable involving all the actors is possible. Deby and his external supporters are firmly opposed to this option. Nevertheless, in the event of being unable to organise this round table, the designated mediator should harmonise the different initiatives into a collective strategy involving the rebellion, the political opposition and regional actors. The AU does not seem appropriate for this role because of its lack of credibility with the Chadian actors. Equally, neither France nor the EU or Libya appears sufficiently impartial to be accepted by all parties. The only remaining possibility is mediation under UN supervision. A mediator appointed by the UN can have the necessary authority to convince all parties. Such a solution would also provide better coordination with the process begun in Dakar between Chad and Sudan as well as greater coherence with the MINURCAT mandate.

B. A NEW NEGOTIATIONS ARCHITECTURE

Chad is a key player in the search for regional stabilisation and its internal stability depends on a new national dialogue that will allow all actors of society to express the grievances of their community. To resolve the country's deep-seated problems, as described in the first part of this report, all Chadian actors must find a new negotiations architecture to produce a transitional government that will allow a renewal of political life and the organisation of credible and transparent elections. This new architecture should include three components.

The **first component** should be based on the 13 August 2007 agreement, but seek broader participation and content. Building on the achievements of the CNS, the negotiations must reach a consensus and compromise on the following issues: reconciliation and inter-communal divisions and violence; the equitable distribution of resources, especially oil; the reestablishment of the administration; the fight against corruption; disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR); security sector reform; and access to land. Participation must be more inclusive, involving civil society, traditional chiefs, religious faiths and the political representatives of the rebel movements. This process should produce a transitional government, which should be given three years in which to prepare elections and build the foundations for a more equitable governance for the benefit of Chadian population.

The **second component** should focus on the armed rebellion and end in a ceasefire agreement. This agreement will end hostilities by specifying the positions of the armed groups and the Chadian army, assembly points in communities of origin and the cantonment of troops

and combatants. It should create a joint military commission to monitor the agreements and discuss contentious issues. Rebel group that sign and implement this ceasefire agreement would be invited to appoint political representatives to participate in the first component of the negotiations.

These two components should be facilitated by a prominent African figure of high moral standing with a mandate from the UN Security Council and supported by the AU. This person and their team must ensure coherence between the two processes, a balance between the actors and the productive development of negotiations. A peacekeeping force (a new MINURCAT with a revised and strengthened mandate) would ensure implementation of the agreed provisions. On the military side, it would verify the implementation of the ceasefire and the cantonment of troops and combatants and coordinate a joint verification mechanism. On the political side, it would support the transitional government in the implementation of the agreement, assist the administration to organise elections and implement a DDR programme, and it would be the focal point for assistance to the government regarding security sector reform.

MINURCAT has an important role to play in this new architecture. It should play a political role by assisting the Chadian authorities to implement the transitional provisions. In the military field, it could be a neutral mediator in the field, verifying the ceasefire agreement and making conflict zones secure. The Security Council that is about to renew the mission's mandate on 24 September without any modification should plan to strengthen it on the next renewal in December, despite the Chadian government's reservations, in order to fill the political and military gaps in the mission's current mandate so it can play a significant role in supporting Chad's transitional authorities when EUFOR withdraws.

For the moment, it is essential that the peacekeeping operations department accelerates its deployment and pressures MINURCAT into fully assuming its mandate to protect civilians. A mission that is incapable of fulfilling its current mandate and proving its operational capacity to protect civilians in the field cannot expect to effectively support the implementation of a political agreement negotiated under pressure in the future. The future political credibility of the UN in Chad is at stake right now and depends on whether MINURCAT is able to fulfil its mandate.

The **third component** should focus on the regional dimensions of the conflict. The extension of the Darfur crisis remains important, all the more so in that Chadian support for Sudanese rebels, especially JEM,

has caused Khartoum to try to overthrow the Deby regime. The crises in the Sudan-Chad-CAR triangle all have very specific and entirely internal ingredients but the conflict between Chad and Sudan in particular and their support for each other's rebels needs a regional approach.

Using the Dakar Agreement as a basis, regional actors must meet under the sponsorship of the AU to find a solution to the political and security problems that are affecting the region. A regional mechanism for regional conflict resolution must be created by the facilitator, the Senegalese government, and focus on the support provided by Sudan and Chad to the different armed groups, the implications and ramifications with the situation in the CAR and the trafficking of arms. This mechanism should also deal with the question of movements of populations and rights to pasture. It should involve the active participation of the joint AU and UN mediator for the Darfur peace process, Djibril Bassolé, the head of UNAMID, Rodolphe Adada, and the head of the future MINURCAT to facilitate political coordination between the peace process actors from the different peacekeeping missions deployed on both sides of the border.

This regional mechanism should create a political and a military commission to resolve contentious issues in each area and ensure political and technical monitoring of the implementation of the decisions taken. Neighbours of the triangle countries (Libya, Egypt, Congo/Brazzaville, Nigeria) would act as guarantors of the different provisions of the agreements and would also participate in a joint verification mechanism to resolve disputes over implementation. MINURCAT and UNAMID would verify border violations and participate in both the verification mechanism and the regional conference.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The crisis in Chad cannot and must not be seen only as a simple consequence of the Darfur war. It has profound causes and is essentially a crisis of the state, manifested in the omnipresence of political and social violence, the hardening ethnic self-identification of communities and the fact that a majority of the population perceives the current regime as the government of one part of Chad against the other, even as one clan's control over the entire country. A complete reorganisation of the state and its institutions and major reforms of Chadian society are indispensable for the country to achieve national unity.

Although the instrumentalisation of the Chadian rebellion by Khartoum is undeniable, it is nonetheless the case that N'Djamena must be ready to rebuild its legitimacy by engaging in a national dialogue aimed at on the one hand, tackling the core problems, including the functioning of the state administration, security sector reform, reconciliation and the equitable distribution of resources; and on the other hand, to survive the incessant rebel attacks, which have succeeded in advancing as far as the capital twice in two years. Without negotiations, they will continue to threaten the Deby regime.

The president should use the international support from which he benefits at this moment to reinvent the Chadian state and negotiate a roadmap to overcome the crisis. This requires him to abandon repression and co-optation in favour of a political vision that will stabilise Chad in what is a chronically unstable region.

ANNEX A

MAP OF CHAD



APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGY

1 December 1990	Idriss Deby's Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS) overthrows Hissène Habré and takes power.
January-April 1993	National Sovereign Conference.
July 1996	First multiparty presidential elections, won by Idriss Deby.
20 May 2001	Presidential elections, won by Deby.
October 2003	The Chad-Cameroon pipeline opens and Chad becomes an oil exporter.
January-February 2004	Thousands of Darfur refugees flee Sudan and arrive in Chad.
6 June 2005	A constitutional referendum authorises Deby to stand for a third term as president.
January-June 2006	Thousands of refugees flee eastern Chad following Janjawid militia attacks.
11 January 2006	The government backs a law that reduces the proportion of oil revenues allocated to development projects. The World Bank suspends its loans.
8 February 2006	Sudan and Chad sign a peace agreement in Tripoli.
April 2006	The FUC launches an offensive in eastern Chad from Sudan and the CAR before going on to attack N'Djamena. Chad breaks off diplomatic relations with Sudan.
3 May 2006	Idriss Deby wins presidential elections that are boycotted by the opposition.
24 December 2006	The Chadian government and the FUC sign a peace agreement.
3 May 2007	Chad and Sudan sign the Riyadh Agreement.
13 August 2007	Signature of the political agreement to strengthen the democratic process in Chad.
25 September 2007	The UN Security Council authorises deployment of a UN and EU peacekeeping force in Chad.
25 October 2007	The Chadian government and four rebel groups sign the Syrte Agreement. The truce only lasts a few weeks.
28 January 2008	The EU authorises deployment of EUFOR in Chad and CAR.
31 January-3 February 2008	Rebel offensive on N'Djamena.
25 February 2008	Announcement of the creation of the National Alliance.
13 March 2008	Chad and Sudan sign the Dakar Agreement.
June 2008	Rebels attack several towns in eastern Chad.
5 August 2008	The commission of inquiry into the events of February 2008 submits its report.

APPENDIX C

KEY OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AND ACTORS

Like the current rebel leaders, the most prominent Chadian opposition leaders have all cooperated more or less closely with Deby in recent years, before distancing themselves from him for various reasons.

Lol Mahamat Choua, leader of the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP) and a National Assembly deputy for his party. At the head of the 13 August Agreement Monitoring committee, a member of the Kanembu ethnic group, he was briefly president of GUNT (Transitional Government of National Unity) in 1979 by virtue of his position as leader of the MPLT (People's Movement for the Liberation of the Chad), one of the Chadian rebel factions supported by Nigeria. He was replaced as head of GUNT by Goukouni Weddeye, less than six months later. He was mayor of N'Djamena in 1986 and a minister in the Hissène Habré government before standing against Deby in the 1996 presidential election. His party later allied itself with Deby for the 2001 election, before boycotting the constitutional referendum in 2005 that allowed Deby to stand for third term in office. He was arrested after the battle off N'Djamena in February 2008, then released after several weeks. He is one of the Chadian leaders who have called for a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue involving the civilian opposition and the rebel movements.

Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, leader of the Party for Liberty and Development (PLD) and CPDC spokesman. A Maba from Biltine province in eastern Chad, he was active in his youth in the FEANF (Federation des étudiants d'Afrique noire en France) and he was later one of the leaders of FROLINAT in the 1970s, before creating the PLD in 1993. Like Lol Mahamat Choua, he was a minister under both Hissène Habré and Deby before standing against the latter in the 2001 presidential election and then boycotting the 2001 constitutional referendum. Many sources claimed that Ibni Oumar was approached to lead an interim government in the event of Deby being overthrown by the rebel attack of February 2008. Such a possibility would explain his arrest and "disappearance" after the battle of N'Djamena.

Jean Alingué, leader of the Union for Democracy and Republic (UDR), one of the main opposition parties. Alingué was one of the southern leaders during the events of 1979 and one of the leaders of the Permanent Committee at the beginning of the 1980s. He was elected president of the National Assembly under Hissène Habré's plebiscitary democracy. He also ensured the transition after Hissène Habré's fall by becoming prime minister until 1992. He stood against Deby in 2001 but boycotted the 2002 legislative elections and the 2005 constitutional referendum. He entered the so-called "inclusive government" formed by the new prime minister, Youssouf Saleh Abbas, after the rebel attack in February 2008. He is justice minister.

Salibou Garba, general secretary of the CPDC, a Ngambaye on his mother's side and a Foulbé on his father's side, he is leader of the National Alliance for Democracy and Development (AND) and second rapporteur on the monitoring committee. He has been a minister under Deby since 1992, successively minister of administration, minister of posts and telecommunications, secretary general of the government and minister of state without portfolio. His career makes him one of the Chadian politicians most accustomed to public administration. This longevity, in successive governments, means he has good personal relations with members of the governing party and with some of President Deby's close advisers. He was threatened during the battle of N'Djamena, but was not arrested.

Saleh Kebzabo, a southern leader, from the Moundang ethnic group and founding president of the National Union for Democracy and Renewal (UNDR). He founded the N'Djamena Hebdo, one of the main opposition newspapers. An adversary of Deby during the 1996 presidential election, he went on to ally himself with Deby, occupying several ministerial posts, including Mines, Energy and Oil, Foreign Affairs, Public Works and Transport and Agriculture. He broke with Deby to stand at the 2001 presidential election and the 2002 legislative election, when he was elected as a deputy. He calls for a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue, and therefore refused to enter the "inclusive government" of April 2008, arguing that CPDC participation in the government would weaken the coalition.

Wadel Abdelkader Kamougué, a southern leader from the Moyen Chari region, president of the Union for Renewal and Democracy (URD). One of the main leaders of the 1975 coup that overthrew Tombalbaye. Vice-president of the GUNT 1979-1982, then agriculture minister under Hissène Habré, after having been one of his

worst enemies. He lost to Deby in the second round of the 1996 presidential election. He was president of the National Assembly 1997-2002, after an agreement between his party and the MPS. Member of the 13 August Agreement Monitoring Committee, he has called for a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue since the events of February. Minister of defence in the April 2008 inclusive government, he was apparently appointed to this position at the express request of the Gabonese president, Omar Bongo.

Ngarledji Yorongar, leader of the Federation, Action for the Republic (FAR), the only major opposition party to refuse to sign the 13 August agreement (although it took part in the discussions preceding the agreement). Yorongar believes it is not appropriate to hold elections while the rebellion exists.²³⁰ He believes there should first be a comprehensive and inclusive dialogue. Yorongar is a virulent critic of Deby and Kamougué, who he accuses of corruption when he was head of the National Assembly. He was elected a deputy for Bebedja (oil zone) in 1997 and came second in the 2001 presidential election. Contrary to most opposition leaders, he did not call for a boycott of the 2005 constitutional referendum, preferring to invite his activists to give a massive "no" vote. However, he boycotted the 2006 presidential election. Arrested several times during the Deby regime, he was one of the three opposition leaders abducted after the February events. He claims he was tortured while under arrest.²³¹

Hamit Mahamat Dahalob, a spokesman for the CPDC and president of the Movement for Democracy and Socialism in Chad, he is also a member of the 13 August Agreement Monitoring Committee. Recently appointed minister of land planning and habitat in the inclusive government. His party split in 2006. One of the dissident wings, led by Salomon Tombalbaye (son of the first Chadian president), formed an alliance with the MPS.

Mbailaou Naimbaye Lossimian, president of the Action for the Republic, Democracy and Development (ARD) and presidential candidate in 1996. Member of the 13 August Agreement Monitoring Committee, he was appointed agriculture minister in the inclusive government, a post he had already occupied in 1959. A former colleague of the first Chadian president, François Tombalbaye, he was minister of tourism and the environment under Hissène Habré. He then had a long period in the wilderness, especially after his failure in the 1996 presidential election. Although originally from one of the most densely populated regions of the country, Western Logone, his party is not seen as being among the most important opposition parties. He nevertheless remains one of the politicians with the most detailed knowledge of the Chadian administrative machinery.

Fidel Moungar, president of Chadian Union for Unity and Socialism (ACTUS). A surgeon, he lives in exile in France, which led to his candidature being disqualified from the 1996 presidential election. Appointed education minister in 1992, Fidel Moungar showed great intellectual competence and negotiating capacity, notably with the Chad Teachers' Union (SET). The first prime minister of the transition after the CNS, he was soon dismissed by President Deby, who criticised him for being too independent. Very active at the CNS, his party has disappeared from the media scene in recent years. This party, composed mainly of intellectual exiles in France, appears to be increasingly disconnected from Chadian realities.

Valentin Bidi Neatobeye, president of the African Party for Peace and Social Justice (PAP/JS). He was among those who called for a federal constitution at the CNS, which earned him the enmity of the government. He was very popular until the end of the CNS, especially with young "southern" students, who appreciated his eloquence and radicalism in his dealings with the government. He later became increasingly subdued and has completely disappeared from view.

²³⁰ Yorongar has declared: "This agreement is the kind of document that we have the habit of signing in Chad. It will never solve the Chadian problem... We need to stop what we are doing to get everyone round the table and reach an agreement that everybody might be able to accept". "L'opposant Yorongar refuse de perdre du temps à signer un accord vain", *Jeune Afrique*, 14 August 2008.

²³¹ Although his physical courage and his unrelenting opposition to the regime are in no doubt, Yorongar nevertheless remains a controversial figure, whose very extreme comments about Deby do little to make him a consensual figure. He seems to be permanently in the process of developing a martyr complex, with both the regime and other opposition leaders, with whom his relations are far from cordial. Curiously, although he has always criticised French officials, he accepted France's offer of political asylum after the events of February 2008. See his website at www.yorongar.com.

APPENDIX D

THE MAIN REBEL GROUPS AND THEIR KEY ACTORS

Alliances, counter-alliances and changes of name are frequent among Chadian rebels, making it difficult to identify their characteristics and follow their development. However, analysis of the events, attacks and actors of the last three years shows that the main rebel movements and leaders are as follows.

UFDD (Union of the Forces for Democracy and Development). This group was originally a union of various very small armed Gorane and Arab groups, (the most important of which were Acheikh Ibn-Oumar's CDR, Mackaye's FUC and Nouri's UFPD) which were federated by Mahamat Nouri on 22 October 2006. Mahamat Nouri, a Gorane (from the Anakazza clan, like Hissène Habré), is a former defence minister under Deby and former ambassador to Saudi Arabia. While in Saudi Arabia, he made links with officials from this country, which has led to Deby claiming that Saudi Arabia funds and supports attacks against his regime. In 2006, the RPJ (Popular Rally for Justice), a Zaghawa faction led by Abakar Tollimi joined the UFDD. One study claims that the movement has 2,000-3,000 men.²³²

UFDD-Fondamentale. Dissident group of the UFDD, founded in May 2007 after tension between Arabs and Gorane within the UFDD. This faction includes Acheikh Ibn Oumar's **CDR (Revolutionary Democratic Counsel)**, Abdelwahid About Mackaye's **FIDEL (Forces for the Instauration of Democracy and Freedom)** and Amine Ben Barka's **CPR (Concord Movement for Progress and Recovery)**. It is currently led by About Mackaye, a Salamat Arab. The UFDD-F seems to be an essentially Arab group.

RFC (Assembly of the Forces for Change). Formerly known as RAFD (Rally of Democratic Forces) and led by Timane Erdimi (he joined SCUD led by Yaya Dillo Djerou, a Zaghawa Bideyat, in 2004), close relatives of Deby and former presidential advisers. The RFC is more than anything a movement of Zaghawa intellectuals and officers that have broken with Deby. The latter has on several occasions tried, with some success, to weaken it either by convincing some of its members to come over to his side, or by making discreet contacts with its leaders through Libya. The RFC, which is claimed to have 3,000 men,²³³ recently refused to join the new **National Alliance** (see below) grouping the UFDD, the UFDD-Fondamentale and other factions, a sign that it is in contact with Deby. In addition, although its main leaders have not publicly said so, the UFDD suspects that the RFC wanted to go it alone at the battle of N'Djamena. Most sources indicate that, since the failed attack in February, the other rebel groups' confidence in the RFC has considerably diminished. Debates within the Zaghawa about contributing to Deby's overthrow in the absence of any guarantee that Deby's successor will come from among their own ranks make them unreliable in the eyes of other groups. From this point of view, it cannot be excluded that the creation of the National Alliance is a way of marginalising Zaghawa insurgents.

CNT (Chadian National Concord Movement). Arab group led by Hassan Al Djineidi. After the signature of the Syrte Agreement, he rallied to the regime and joined the inclusive government of Youssouf Saleh Abbas, as secretary of state for national defence, responsible for former combatants and war victims. Dissatisfied with this move, many combatants created the **Renovated National Concord of Chad (CNT/R)** whose communiqués announce their membership of the National Alliance.

FUC (United Front for Change). Led by the Tama, Mahamat Nour Abdelkerim, this group failed in its attempts to take N'Djamena in April 2006 and to unite the rebel movements under one command, as wanted by Khartoum. Nour, from the family of the Sultan of the Tama and nephew of Mahamat Garfa, former chief of staff, who founded the *National Resistance Alliance* in 1994, is known for his distrust of Zaghawa power, even though he is a veteran of the campaign that brought Deby to power.²³⁴ Loyal to Khartoum, which also trained his troops,²³⁵ he participated in Janjawid operations in eastern Chad. Under the auspices of Libya, the FUC signed a peace agreement with Deby,

²³² Gerard Prunier, "Armed Movements in Sudan", op. cit., pp. 7-8.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Simon Massey and Roy May, "Commentary: The Crisis in Chad", *African Affairs*, vol. 105 no. 420, 2006, pp. p. 444.

²³⁵ "Deby hangs on", *Africa Confidential*, vol.47, n°9, 28 April 2006.

which led to the appointment of Mahamat Nour as defence minister. However, the non-implementation of this agreement has led to tension between FUC combatants and the ANT. No longer controlling his troops, which are stationed in the centre of the country, Mahamat Nour escaped an attempt to assassinate him in N'Djamena and sought refuge in the Libyan Embassy, where he learned of his dismissal by Deby on 1 December 2007. Most of FUC's combatants have joined the **UFCD**.

FSR (Front for the Salvation of the Republic). Led by Ahmat Soubiane, an Arab from Guera, who was a founder member of the MPS and former minister of public security under Deby in 1992, then ambassador to the U.S. and Canada. Having suddenly broken with Deby, he resigned from his post to create a rebel movement in 2007. The FSR seems to be still an embryonic movement with only a weak military presence in the field. Moreover, it seems to suffer from the absence in the field of its leader, who lives in exile in the United States.

UFCD (Union of the Forces for Change and Democracy). Created by Adouma Hassaballah Jedareb in March 2008, the UFCD groups Ouaddaïen combatants from the UFDD and the RFC who preferred to join a warlord from their region. Very active in the rebel coalition, the UFCD took part in the major offensives against the Chadian army in 2008, notably the February attack and the battle of Goz Beïda at the beginning of June. The **RFC** sporadically accuses Tama combatants (ex **FUC** that have joined the UFCD) of killing Zaghawa civilians in Dar Tama.

The National Alliance was created in February 2008 after the failed attempt to take N'Djamena. With a strong Gorane and Arab component, it is led by Mahamat Nouri. According to the different rebel information organs, the National Alliance mainly groups Mahamat Nouri's UFDD, Abdelwahid Aboud Mackaye's UFDD-Fondamentale, Adouma Hassaballah's UFCD and Ahmat Soubiane's FSR. FUC combatants have also allegedly joined this coalition. For the moment, the RFC remains outside this alliance.

ANNEX E

ACRONYMS

ACTUS	Chadian Union for Unity and Socialism
AN	National Alliance
AND	National Alliance for Democracy and Development
ANR	National Resistance Alliance
ANS	National Security Agency
ANT	National Chad Army
ARD	Action for the Republic, Democracy and Development
ATD	Chadian Alliance for Democracy and Development
AU	African Union
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CENI	Independent National Electoral Commission
CDR	Revolutionary Democratic Counsel
CDRT	Chadian Revolutionary Democratic Counsel
CMAP	Coordination of Armed and Political Movements
CNAR	National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees
CNT	Chadian National Concord Movement
CNT/R	Renovated National Concord of Chad
CNS	National Sovereign Conference
CONAFIT	National Coordination of Support for the Deployment of the International Force in Eastern Chad
CPDC	Coordination for the Defence of the Constitution
CPR	Concord Movement for Progress and Recovery
DIS	Integrated Security Detachment
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Mission
FACA	Central African Republic Armed Forces
FAN	Armed Forces of the North
FAR	Federation, Action for the Republic
FAR/PF	Federation, Action for the Republic/Parti Federation
FGF	Savings fund for future generations
FIDEL	Forces for the Instauration of Democracy and Freedom
FROLINAT	Chad National Liberation Front
FSR	Front for the Salvation of the Republic
FUC	United Front for Change
FUCD	United front for Democratic Change
GNNT	Chad National and Nomadic Guard
GP	Presidential Guard
GUNT	Transitional Government of National Unity
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
LTDH	Chad Human Rights League
MDJT	Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad
MINURCAT	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
MNRD	National Movement for Recovery and Development
MPS	Patriotic Salvation Movement
MSF	Médecins sans frontières

PAP/JS	African Party for Peace and Social Justice
PLD	Party for Liberty and Development
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PTPH	Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection
RAFD	Rally of Democratic Forces
RFC	Assembly of the Forces for Change
RDP	Rally for Democracy and Progress
RPJ	Popular Rally for Justice
SCUD	Platform for Change, Unity and Democracy
SET	Chad Teachers' Union
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
SNER	National Road Maintenance Company
STEE	Chad Electricity Company
UDR	Union for Democracy and Republic
UFCD	Union of the Forces for Change and Democracy
UFDD	Union of the Forces for Democracy and Development
UN	Union Nationale
UN	United Nations
UNDR	National Union for Democracy and Renewal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
URD	Union for Renewal and Democracy