

Chad: A New Conflict Resolution Framework

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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 peacekeeping 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.

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