



Instability and Humanitarian Conditions in Chad

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July 1, 2010

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

RS22798

Summary

As the Sahel region weathers another year of drought and poor harvests, the political and security situation in Chad remains volatile, compounding a worsening humanitarian situation in which some 2 million Chadians are at risk of hunger. In the western Sahelian region of the country, the World Food Program warns that an estimated 60% of households, some 1.6 million people, are currently food insecure. Aid organizations warn that the situation is critical, particularly for remote areas in the west with little international aid presence, and that the upcoming rainy season is likely to further complicate the delivery of assistance.

In the east, ethnic clashes, banditry, and fighting between government forces and rebel groups, both Chadian and Sudanese, have contributed to a fragile security situation. The instability has forced over 200,000 Chadians from their homes in recent years. In addition to the internal displacement, over 340,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) and Sudan's Darfur region have fled violence in their own countries and now live in refugee camps in east and southern Chad, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). With Chadian security forces stretched thin, the threat of bandit attacks on the camps and on aid workers has escalated. The instability has also impacted some 700,000 Chadians whose communities have been disrupted by fighting and strained by the presence of the displaced.

The United Nations and the European Union (EU) began deployment of a multidimensional presence in Chad and the CAR in late 2007 to improve regional security so as to facilitate the safe and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. The U.N. mission, known as MINURCAT, assumed peacekeeping operations from the EU force in March 2009, but it faced logistical challenges in its deployment and a shortage of troops. In January 2010, the Chadian government requested that the mission's mandate not be renewed. After consultations between the government and the U.N. Secretariat, the U.N. Security Council resolved in May 2010 to begin a reduction in MINURCAT's presence in Chad, to be completed by December 31, 2010. The Chadian government has expressed a commitment to protecting civilians and humanitarian workers, but some observers question the capacity of its security forces to fulfill this mandate.

A January 2010 agreement between the governments of Chad and Sudan has led to improved relations between the two countries, and they have allegedly ceased to provide support for each other's respective rebel groups. Legislative elections, postponed since 2007, are scheduled for November 10, 2010, and presidential elections are to be held in April 2011. This report will be updated as events warrant.

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Introduction

Chad, a landlocked country roughly twice the size of Texas, has had a turbulent history of religious and ethnic conflict and intermittent civil war in its 50 years of independence. Bordered by Libya to the north and Sudan to the east, it is considered to be among the world's 10 poorest countries, according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Index. Persistent conflict has hindered the country's development, despite significant oil reserves. One in five children dies before the age of five, and the country's child malnutrition and mortality rates are rising. Chad also is perceived to be one of the world's most corrupt countries.¹ *Foreign Policy* magazine ranked Chad second on its 2009 Failed States Index, up from a ranking of fourth in 2008.²

Political Instability

Chad gained its independence from France in 1960. Composed of approximately 200 ethnic groups, Chad's diverse population is broadly divided into predominantly Muslim Arab and non-Arab ethnic groups located in the north and east, and indigenous groups practicing Christian and various traditional beliefs located in the south.³ The country has been politically unstable since 1965, when a tax protest led northern, Islamic tribes to rebel against the southern, Christian-dominated government. Years of authoritarian rule and civil war followed. Chad's current president, Idriss Déby Itno, a former general, took power by force when he launched a rebellion against then-President Hissein Habré from Sudan in 1989. Déby's forces, reportedly aided by Libya and Sudan and largely unopposed by French troops stationed in Chad, seized the capital, N'Djamena, in 1990, forcing Habré into exile. Habré has been sentenced to death in absentia in Chad and is slated to be tried in Senegal for human rights abuses committed under his regime.⁴ Déby, named president in 1991, pledged to create a democratic multi-party political system.

Chad at a Glance

Population: 10.5 million
Population Growth Rate: 2.038%
Gross Domestic Product (official exchange rate): \$7.06 billion
Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$1,600
Gross National Income (GNI) per Capita: \$540
Key Exports: Oil, cotton, cattle, gum arabic
Religions: Muslim 51%, Christian 35%, indigenous beliefs 14%
Language: French and Arabic (official), Sara, and more than 120 indigenous languages and dialects
Infant Mortality Rate: 97.05 deaths per 1,000 births
Life Expectancy: 47.99 years
HIV/AIDS Adult Prevalence: 3.5%
Literacy: 25.7% ; male: 40.7%, female 12.8%
Sources: CIA; UNAIDS; World Bank

¹ Chad ranks 175 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index, which measures business people and country analysts' perceptions of corruption among public officials and politicians.

² The magazine uses economic, social, political, and military indicators to rank countries by their "vulnerability to violent internal conflict and social dysfunction." Only Somalia was considered more unstable in 2009.

³ Chadian "Arabs" are descendants of Arab immigrants, most of whom settled in the area between the 14th and 19th centuries.

⁴ Habré was indicted by a Senegalese court in 2000, but the case stalled. In 2005, lawyers filed a complaint in Belgium, now home to some victims, and in February 2009, Belgium filed a complaint against Senegal with the International Court of Justice because the country had yet to begin trial proceedings against Habré. Belgium's suit was dismissed in May 2009. Senegal has requested financial assistance from the international community to cover costs associated with a Habré trial, but to date there has been no movement to commence proceedings.

Chad's first multi-party presidential elections were held in 1996; legislative elections followed in 1997. Déby won reelection in 2001, and his party won a majority of seats in the 2002 legislative elections. According to the State Department's annual human rights reports, Chad's elections have all been marked by irregularities and fraud. The opposition boycotted the most recent elections, held in 2006 after the constitution was amended to allow Déby a third term. The government initiated a dialogue with the political opposition in 2007; in August, the parties agreed to postpone the 2007 legislative elections to 2009 to allow a new census and the creation of a more representative electoral commission. A new commission was formed in July 2009 and a new census published in October. Legislative and local elections are currently scheduled to be held on November 10, 2010. The opposition now holds half the seats on the electoral commission, but questions remain regarding the body's ability to conduct a credible election. Presidential elections are anticipated in April 2011.

The political dialogue between the government and the opposition has been strained, particularly following the February 2008 arrest of several opposition and civic leaders. Seven months later, in September, a commission of inquiry officially concluded that one of those arrested, Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, a respected former minister who was the spokesman of the opposition coalition, Coordination des partis politiques pour la défense de la Constitution (CPDC), had died in custody. European donors nevertheless have continued to support the 2007 political accord and are expected to provide technical support for the upcoming elections. After Déby's appointment of a new prime minister in April 2008 and the subsequent appointment of four former political opponents to high-level cabinet positions, some observers suggested that the president might be moving toward more inclusive governance. Others viewed the appointments as an attempt to divide the opposition, which, with over 100 political parties, remains weak and fragmented. Déby appointed another prime minister in March 2010 after the previous office holder resigned amid allegations of corruption. He also appointed 18 new ministers, including nine women.

The Armed Opposition

Some opponents of President Déby have used his perceived lack of democratic legitimacy to foment armed efforts to oust the long-serving Chadian leader. Déby has faced several coup attempts, and diverse armed political and regional factions have been active since the 1990s. Shifting rebel alliances, which include defectors from the government, gained strength in the east in 2005-2006 and launched a series of raids on strategic government positions. Inter-communal violence not directly related to the rebellion also increased. Rebels attacked the capital, N'Djamena, in April 2006, and Déby declared a state of emergency in November of that year. Critics charge that he used the state of emergency, which prohibited public rallies and campaigning and allowed the government to censor the press, to silence opposition.⁵

In October 2007, the government signed a peace agreement in Sirte, Libya, with the main rebel groups based in eastern Chad. However, the agreement was not fully implemented, and the fighting has continued, sporadically. The Sirte agreement was the latest in a series of failed negotiations to bring a peaceful settlement to the rebellion.⁶ In early February 2008, rebel forces

⁵ The 2006 state of emergency lasted four months and applied to N'Djamena and select regions in the east, north and south. It was reissued in October 2007 for 3 regions in the east and north.

⁶ For example, in December 2006, Déby signed a peace agreement with Mahamat Nour Abdelkerim, then-leader of a coalition of 13 rebel groups. Nour was appointed Minister of Defense in March 2007. Fighting between his forces and (continued...)

advanced on the capital in an unsuccessful attempt to force Déby from power.⁷ Hundreds of civilians were reportedly killed in the fighting, and an estimated 30,000 Chadians fled across the Cameroon border, 10 miles from N'Djamena. Rebel groups later attacked and briefly held several towns in eastern Chad in June 2008. In August 2008, a Chadian court issued death sentences *in absentia* for several of the rebel leaders.

Chad's main armed groups, who have been divided by ethnic and personal rivalries, agreed in November 2008 to unify their efforts to overthrow Déby. Their new rebel alliance, Union des forces de la résistance (UFR), which is composed of diverse rebel groups and led by Timane Erdimi, a nephew of President Déby, launched an advance in the east in early May 2009. They were repelled by Chadian forces, who pursued them into Sudanese territory. Like former rebel groupings, the UFR has been prone to infighting and faces a strategic disadvantage against the Chadian military's air power.⁸ After one of its factions clashed with Chadian forces in late April 2010, reportedly sustaining significant losses according to some media reports, a new rebel grouping, Alliance nationale pour le changement démocratique (ANCD) emerged, headed by former UFR leader Mahamat Nouri.

Ethnic Conflict

Chad's ethnic rivalries are complex and fluid, and they have been compounded by conflict over land and limited natural resources such as water. An increasing focus of concern has become ethnic violence between President Déby's ethnic group, the Zaghawa, and the Tama (both of which are non-Arab, predominantly Muslim, ethnic groups in eastern Chad). Conflict within the factionalized Zaghawa tribe also is a factor. The Zaghawa, who compose less than 3% of Chad's population, control a majority of government positions. Both Chad and the Darfur region of Sudan are home to the Zaghawa, elements of which have played key roles in Chad's complex inter-ethnic alliances and conflicts and in the Darfur conflict.

Regional Conflict

The ongoing conflict in Darfur has displaced more than 2 million Sudanese and led large numbers to flee into Chad, generating a humanitarian crisis in the east. Refugee inflows from Darfur and the CAR have also increased social tensions linked to increasing demand on local resources, despite the provision of aid to the refugees by international aid groups. The Darfur conflict has also heightened political instability in Chad. Chad and Sudan have periodically accused one another of sponsoring rebellions against their respective governments, despite a May 2007 peace agreement signed by the two countries in Saudi Arabia and another agreement signed in Dakar, Senegal, in March 2008. A 2009 report by a U.N. panel of experts supported such allegations.⁹

(...continued)

the national army resumed in November 2007, and Nour, who was subsequently dismissed from the government, fled to Sudan.

⁷ The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted a statement drafted by France that condemned the attack and expressed support for African Union mediation efforts. The Security Council did not agree on a French proposal to use "all means necessary" to halt the rebellion.

⁸ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Chad Country Report*, June 2009.

⁹ U.N. Security Council, "Report of the Panel of Experts Established Pursuant to Resolution 1591 (2005) Concerning (continued...)"

Chad has alleged that Sudan backed the February 2008 assault on N'Djamena and the June advance in the east. Reports suggest that one of the Darfur rebel groups may have provided support to the Chadian army during the attack. Sudan in turn accused Chad of backing Sudanese rebels involved in a May 2008 attack on Omdurman, a suburb of the Sudanese capital.¹⁰ The two governments renewed diplomatic ties in November 2008 after mediation by Libya, but allegations of support for each other's respective rebel groups continued. Another agreement was signed in Qatar in early May 2009, only days before a May 2009 advance by Chadian rebels, purportedly staged from Sudan. In response, the Chadian Air Force conducted strikes against rebels within Sudanese territory, which the Sudanese government in turn characterized as "acts of war."¹¹ Sudan threatened to shoot down Chadian planes if they crossed into Sudanese airspace again. Reports suggest that the Sudanese Air Force bombed a refugee camp in Chad on May 28, 2009 as it pursued Sudanese rebels in the area; Chad conducted further bombing raids in Darfur in July.¹² The United Nations, the African Union, the United States and other international actors pressed the two governments to resume talks, and diplomatic communication resumed in October.

On January 15, 2010, the governments of Chad and Sudan signed an agreement in N'Djamena to deny rebel groups the use of their territories and to normalize relations. Following the agreement, President Déby visited Khartoum and appointed a Chadian ambassador to the Sudanese capital in February. The U.N. Secretary-General reports that relations between the governments have "improved significantly."¹³ Trade across the Chad-Sudan border at three crossing points that had been closed since 2003 resumed in April 2010. Chad and Sudan have deployed a cross-border force of 3,000 to counter criminal activity and movement by armed opposition groups; the force rotates the location of its joint command between Abeche, Chad, and El Geneina, Sudan. In May, Chadian immigration officials forced Darfur rebel leader Khalil Ibrahim, whose forces have used Chad as a base of operations, to return to Libya when he tried to enter the country through N'Djamena's airport. The Chadian response may indicate an effort to abide by the January agreement.

The United Nations currently maintains refugee camps in eastern Chad and the south. In addition to the estimated 268,000 Sudanese refugees, the camps currently provide shelter for some 75,000 CAR refugees and over 170,000 displaced Chadians.¹⁴ Other displaced Chadians live outside the camps among host communities. The camps, and the host communities, struggle with shortages of water and firewood. As a result of a 2007 incident involving French aid workers,¹⁵ Chad reportedly tightened its oversight of non-governmental organizations working in the country and

(...continued)

the Sudan," S/2009/562, October 29, 2009.

¹⁰ Other accusations have been addressed by the respective governments in letters to the President of the U.N. Security Council. See, for example, S/2008/212, S/2008/222, and S/2008/325.

¹¹ "Sudan Accuses Chad of 'Acts of War' with Air Raids," Reuters, May 15, 2009.

¹² "Rights Groups Denounce Deadly Bombing Raids in Chad," Inter Press Service, June 3, 2009; and U.N. Security Council, S/2009/562, October 29, 2009.

¹³ U.N. Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad (MINURCAT)," S/2010/217, April 29, 2010.

¹⁴ Refugee and IDP figures from UNHCR and OCHA for June 2010.

¹⁵ In October 2007, six French aid workers from the charity Zoe's Ark were arrested in Chad on charges of abduction and fraud after they attempted to fly 103 Chadian children to Europe. The majority of the children, whom the aid workers claimed were Darfur orphans, were, in fact, native Chadians, many of whom still had at least one living parent or guardian. The aid workers were repatriated to France to serve eight-year sentences. Déby later pardoned them.

increased travel restrictions. Aid agencies contend that these restrictions have impeded the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as has general insecurity in the east.

The region where the camps are located has been plagued by violence and criminal activity, and several international humanitarian aid compounds have been looted and aid workers threatened or attacked. Several international aid staff have been kidnapped. Criminal acts against humanitarian staff rose in 2009 to the highest levels seen during the conflict.¹⁶ Some groups have, at times, had to temporarily suspend operations; others have removed international staff from the region. The director of the humanitarian group Save the Children, a French national, was killed in May 2008, and the director of the Chadian government's refugee agency was killed in an ambush in October 2009. President Déby opposed U.N. proposals to allow a peacekeeping force to secure the borders with Sudan and the CAR until June 2007, when the European Union offered to provide an EU peacekeeping force (primarily from France, which has been Chad's strongest military ally and one of its largest bilateral donors). His position on an international force subsequently changed.

Multinational Peacekeeping Operations

On September 25, 2007, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 1778, approving the establishment of a multinational presence in Chad and the Central African Republic to (1) contribute to the protection of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and civilians in danger; (2) facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance; and (3) create favorable conditions for reconstruction and economic and social development. Based on Resolution 1778, two multinational bodies, a U.N. mission and a European Union (EU) military force, were created under a single mandate.¹⁷ The U.N. presence, known as the U.N. Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), has been responsible for police training and reinforcing judicial infrastructure, and is working with Chadian forces to reinforce safety for refugees, IDPs, and aid agencies in the camps in the east. The EU force, known as EUFOR Chad/CAR (hereafter EUFOR), was tasked with providing general security for civilians and facilitating the free movement of humanitarian assistance and personnel. EURFOR was authorized to use military force, whereas MINURCAT was not under its original mandate. Some humanitarian officials expressed concern that having two separate international missions in Chad complicated perceptions among the local population, as well as among the region's various rebel groups. At least one rebel group warned that it considered the EU force a "foreign occupation army," because it included French forces, whom the rebels did not see as neutral.

The U.N. Security Council extended MINURCAT's mandate through Resolutions 1834 in September 2008 and 1861 in January 2009, but logistical challenges impeded the deployment of the mission. EUFOR's deployment of 3,700 troops, originally expected in November 2007, was also delayed by funding and logistical challenges. The rebel advance on N'Djamena in early February 2008 further delayed deployment, but the force reached initial operating capacity, with almost half its full force deployed, in March, and as of December 2008, 3,300 troops had deployed.¹⁸ Déby criticized EUFOR in June for not engaging the rebel advance, and some aid

¹⁶ According to the United Nations, 192 attacks were reported between January and October 2009.

¹⁷ This "dual-mission system," with a combined U.N.-EU mandate, was the first of its kind. "Chad: Dual Peacekeeping Mission Seeks to Dispel Confusion," U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), January 11, 2008.

¹⁸ The European Union reached an agreement with the Russian Federation in November 2008 for four Russian transport helicopters to aid EUFOR's deployment.

groups charge that the force failed to protect them. Under Security Council Resolution 1834, the Council expressed its intention for EUFOR to transfer authority to a U.N. military component. That transfer took place on March 15, 2009, when EUFOR's mandate expired. Under the new mandate authorized in Resolution 1861, MINURCAT was authorized to have a military component of 5,200 troops.¹⁹ Anticipating continued deployment delays, due in part to a shortage of helicopter assets, the U.N. Secretary-General revised the target to 4,700 soldiers by the end of 2009; but by the year's end, less than 3,000 troops had deployed. The deployment tempo subsequently increased, and as of late April 2010, the force stood at 3,442 troops.

The shortage of troops and equipment over the course of MINURCAT's deployment has impeded its ability to protect IDPs, refugees, and humanitarian staff, although human rights groups argue that the force has played a critical role in security and human rights protection.²⁰ In January 2010, the Chadian government issued a formal request to the United Nations not to renew the mandate of MINURCAT's military component, which was due to expire in March 2010. Chadian officials based their request on the slow pace of MINURCAT's troop deployment and planned infrastructure projects, the allegedly improved security situation in the east, and a decision by the government to take primary responsibility for the protection of civilians. During ensuing consultations between the government and the U.N. Secretariat, the Chadian government revised its request, and in March the Security Council extended the force's mandate until May 15, 2010, under Security Council Resolution 1913. In May, the Security Council further extended the mandate through the end of May with Resolution 1922.

On May 25, the Security Council approved Resolution 1923, which extended MINURCAT's mandate until December 31, 2010, but ordered the gradual reduction of its military component and transfer of civilian protection responsibilities to the Chadian security forces. Specifically outlined in the resolution is the Chadian government's commitment to assuming full responsibility for (1) ensuring the security and protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and IDPs; (2) facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel by improving security in eastern Chad; and (3) ensuring the security and freedom of movement of MINURCAT staff and United Nations and associated personnel. A joint Chad-U.N. Working Group is expected to monitor the situation on the ground and assess progress by the government of Chad on several additional benchmarks related to civilian protection, including voluntary return and resettlement of IDPs, demilitarization of the camps, and improved domestic law enforcement capacity. Resolution 1923 commits MINURCAT to reducing its military component to 2,200 personnel by July 15, 2010, and to commence the withdrawal of remaining troops on October 15, to be completed by December 31, 2010. Until the force begins its final withdrawal in October, MINURCAT retains authorization to provide security for U.N. personnel, facilities and equipment and to, when necessary, conduct medical evacuations of U.N. personnel or extractions of U.N. personnel and humanitarian staff in danger. The resolution does permit MINURCAT, "acting within its means and capabilities and where possible in consultation with the Government of Chad," to "respond to imminent threats of violence to civilians in the

¹⁹ U.N. officials had initially recommended 6,000 troops, but the Chadian government expressed concerns with a force of that size. See U.N. Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad," S/2008/760, December 4, 2008.

²⁰ See, for example, Amnesty International, "UN Move to Withdraw From Chad Puts Thousands at Risk," May 24, 2010.

immediate vicinity.”²¹ Some humanitarian officials have expressed concern that the withdrawal of the U.N. force could create a “security vacuum” in the east.²²

Among MINURCAT’s responsibilities has been the training a special local police unit, the *Détachement intégré de sécurité* (DIS), to assume security responsibilities for the refugee camps. This directive was extended in Resolution 1923 for the duration of MINURCAT’s mandate. The first group of trained officers deployed in October 2008, and as of April 2010, approximately 800 had deployed. According to a report by the U.N. Secretary-General, refugee leaders have indicated that DIS patrols have contributed to an increased sense of security and allowed greater freedom of movement in and around the camps.²³ DIS also provides security escorts for humanitarian aid staff. The United Nations manages a trust fund, to which the United States contributes, to support DIS. MINURCAT, along with other U.N. agencies and international donors, has also supported a range of programs to build judicial and corrections capacity in eastern Chad. U.N. reports point to a shortage of financial and human resources in the Chadian justice sector, a lack of basic court and prison infrastructure, among other shortcomings, in the east, which in turn hampers efforts to address the high level of criminality in the region.

Child Soldiers

According to U.N. estimates, as many as 10,000 children may have been used in combat and non-combat roles by Chadian rebel groups, paramilitary forces, and the national army in recent years. The government denied the existence of child soldiers in its army until May 2007, when it signed an agreement with UNICEF to end recruitment of persons under age 18 and begin demobilization of those already within the security forces. According to Human Rights Watch, the government continued to limit access by international child protection officials to military installations to verify demobilization after the agreement.²⁴ In October 2008, however, the U.N. Secretary-General noted that the government had begun an effort to sensitize military commanders and personnel on the issue of child recruitment, and in April 2010, the Secretary-General reported that the Chadian government has “shown a consistent policy position and commitment against child recruitment,” and has granted the U.N. and the International Committee for the Red Cross access to military camps to verify the presence of children and facilitate their release from the army.²⁵ According to his 2010 report, however, the army and other armed groups continued to recruit and use children in 2009; MINURCAT documented 26 cases of child recruitment by the army during the year, and 19 children remained associated with the army as of April 2010. The United Nations continues to express concern regarding the recruitment of children by rebel groups, including armed Sudanese groups such as the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), and local militias in and around refugee camps.

²¹ U.N. Security Council, Resolution 1923 (2010), May 25, 2010. The Resolution also authorizes MINURCAT to fulfill several functions specific to its operations in the CAR.

²² Reuters, “Chad Must Protect Convoys in Food Crisis – WFP,” May 6, 2010.

²³ U.N. Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad (MINURCAT),” S/2010/217, April 29, 2010.

²⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Early to War: Child Soldiers in the Chad Conflict*, July 2007.

²⁵ U.N. Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad,” S/2009/535, October 14, 2009; and U.N. General Assembly and Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict,” A/64/742-S/2010/181, April 13, 2010.

Agriculture, Oil, and the Economy

Eighty percent of Chad's population is dependent on subsistence farming and herding, and droughts and locust infestations continue to affect food production and contribute to a high malnutrition rate. Inadequate rains and locust attacks in 2009 contributed to a 34% drop in cereal production, and experts report that the harvest was the worst in five years. Almost half of the country's population is classified as food insecure, and over 16% of children under the age of five currently suffer from acute malnutrition, according to the United Nations. Almost 40% of Chadian children are chronically malnourished. In the western Sahelian region of the country, the World Food Program warns that an estimated 60% of households, some 1.6 million people, are currently food insecure. Humanitarian organizations warn that the situation is critical, particularly for remote areas in the west with little international aid presence, and that the upcoming rainy season is likely to further complicate aid delivery.²⁶

Lake Chad, the region's largest source of fresh water and once the size of Maryland, has shrunk by 90% in the past 50 years and is expected to dry up completely in the next 20 years, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. The U.N. estimates that some 30 million people in Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria rely on the lake for their livelihoods, and increasing competition over water resources may lead to further conflict and a possible humanitarian disaster. Experts suggest that major changes to water management must be made.

When Chad began oil production in 2003, Chadians had high expectations that oil revenues might serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development.²⁷ Corruption, weak state institutions, and chronic instability, however, threaten to undermine advances made in the oil sector and could deter future high capital investment projects elsewhere in the region. The Chad-Cameroon Petroleum Development and Pipeline Project is a \$4 billion initiative, initially backed by the World Bank, to develop oil fields in southern Chad and export the oil through a 665-mile pipeline to offshore oil loading facilities on Cameroon's coast.²⁸ World Bank funding for the project was conditional on a portion of the oil revenues being held in a British bank account from which Chad could only draw for poverty-reduction projects. In 2006, the World Bank suspended loans to Chad and froze oil revenue accounts after the government changed its revenue management law and significantly increased military spending. Chad and the World Bank reached a compromise in June 2006, allowing the government to use 30% (formerly 20%) of oil revenues for its own purposes, while the remainder would continue to be used for development programs. In September 2008, the World Bank announced its withdrawal from the project, citing Chad's failure to comply with key aspects of the agreement. Chad has reimbursed the Bank for its loans. The World Bank continues to engage the Chadian government, however, and reopened its office in N'Djamena in January 2009 on a reduced basis. The International Monetary Fund began a new Staff-Monitored Program with the government focusing on fiscal discipline in April 2009, and during a June 2010 Article IV Consultation praised Chadian authorities for their national poverty reduction strategy. Under pressure from the IMF, the government has revised its 2010 budget, although some analysts suggest that it remains based on overly ambitious revenue projections.

²⁶ Reuters, "World Wakes to African Hunger – Late Again?" June 18, 2010.

²⁷ See, for example, "Chad: Weapons Instead of ARVs," IRIN, June 30, 2008.

²⁸ In addition to the World Bank, sponsors included ExxonMobil (with 40% of the private equity), Malaysia's Petronas (35%), and Chevron-Texaco (25%).

Declines in both oil and agricultural production have contributed to a decline in real GDP growth, from an estimated 7.9% in 2005 to -2% in 2009.²⁹ Oil production, estimated at 144,000 barrels/day in 2007, has decreased in recent years, falling by 6% from 2008 to 2009, when production averaged less than 120,000 barrels/day. In April 2010, Chad became a candidate country within the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a global effort to improve transparency in the oil, gas, and mining sector. Under EITI, candidate countries like Chad commit to publishing all payments of taxes, royalties, and fees they receive from their extractive sector, and extractive companies operating in those countries publish what they pay to the government. Chad has until April 2012 to comply with these standards to be then certified as EITI Compliant.

U.S.-Chadian Relations

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Chad are cordial. The United States is currently the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to Chad and has provided almost \$700 million in humanitarian aid to the country since the onset of the humanitarian crisis in FY2004.³⁰ This includes over \$190 million in FY2009 and an estimated \$93 million in humanitarian assistance to date in FY2010.³¹ The Obama Administration has requested \$7.38 million in non-emergency assistance to Chad for FY2011, the majority of which would be directed toward health and agricultural development programs. The U.S. State Department's foreign policy priorities in Chad include (1) encouraging regional stability and resolving the refugee crisis and humanitarian emergency; (2) promoting democracy and reducing the potential for intolerance and extremism; and (3) strengthening Chadian counterterrorism capabilities.³² FY2009 Economic Support Fund resources (ESF) continue to be used to support preparations for anticipated 2010-2011 elections. The U.S. Agency for International Development's Mission in Chad closed in 1995 due to declining funding and security concerns; USAID assistance, much of which consists of monetized food aid to support health and agriculture initiatives, is overseen by its West Africa regional office in Ghana, and USAID Food for Peace (FFP) assistance is managed by the regional FFP Office in Senegal. As a result of the USAID mission's departure, the U.S. Embassy in N'Djamena operates a Democracy and Development section to monitor and administer foreign aid programs and identify alternative sources of U.S. government funding to meet humanitarian and development needs. The country's Peace Corps program closed in 2006. The State Department has issued a travel warning to U.S. citizens advising extreme caution for those traveling in the country and recommending that they avoid all travel to eastern Chad and the area bordering the CAR due to an escalated level of violent crime, including carjacking, kidnapping, and murder. USAID has expressed concern that the withdrawal of MINURCAT may jeopardize relief efforts and the safety of aid workers in the east.³³

²⁹ EIU, *Chad Country Report*, June 2010.

³⁰ Humanitarian aid figures by donor are compiled by the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and available at <http://www.reliefweb.int.fts>.

³¹ USAID, *Chad – Complex Emergency: Situation Report #3, FY2010*, June 28, 2010.

³² U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Operations Congressional Budget Justifications, FY2009, FY2010, and FY2011*.

³³ USAID, *Chad – Complex Emergency: Situation Report #3, FY2010*, June 28, 2010.

Security Assistance and Counterterrorism Cooperation

Despite concerns regarding poor governance, the U.S. government has considered the Déby government an ally in the effort to counter violent extremism. In 2004, elements of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) (now known as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb or AQIM) entered Chadian territory and met resistance from Chadian forces. Today, reports suggest that AQIM may be associated with smuggling in Chad, but it has yet to conduct attacks in the country. Chad is a part of the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP), a U.S. interagency effort that aims to increase regional government's border protection and regional counter-terrorism capabilities, as well as "to promote democratic governance as a means to discredit terrorist ideology."³⁴ The country has received over \$8 million in military-to-military assistance since FY2005 through the Department of Defense's (DOD) Operation Enduring Freedom – Trans-Sahara (OEF-TS), the military support component of TSCTP, and in FY2007 Chad received \$1.7 million in DOD global train and equip, or "Section 1206", assistance to improve its tactical airlift capacity. Other TSCTP-related security assistance has been funded through the State Department's Peacekeeping Operations (PKO); Foreign Military Financing (FMF); and Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) accounts.

The United States also provides bilateral security assistance to Chad to professionalize and modernize its security forces, although annual appropriations legislation in recent years has limited some of this training to that which promotes "democratic values" and respect for human rights. The State Department's FY2011 budget request includes \$380,000 in International Military Education and Training (IMET) and \$400,000 in Foreign Military Financing (FMF), part of which would be used to continue training for the Chadian police force. The State Department argues that its emphasis on such assistance to Chadian forces "is crucial because of their historic involvement in unconstitutional regime change, suppression of dissent, and lack of adherence to standards of good governance."³⁵ The U.S. government discontinued demining assistance in 2007 due to "institutional weakness and a lack of political will to address the problem."³⁶ Landmines continue to kill hundreds of Chadians annually, and approximately 80% of the victims are children, according to U.N. Mine Action.

Congressional Action

Congress has expressed concern for the violence and humanitarian crisis in the region through various legislation and hearings. In addition to numerous hearings on the conflict in neighboring Darfur and resulting refugee situation, hearings addressing Chad include a March 2007 hearing on Chad and the CAR and a November 2009 hearing on U.S. counterterrorism priorities in the Sahel, both by the Senate Foreign Relations Africa Subcommittee.

³⁴ Testimony of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs James Swann at the Senate Foreign Relations Africa Subcommittee hearing on Chad and the CAR, March 20, 2007.

³⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Operations Congressional Budget Justification, Fiscal Year 2011*.

³⁶ U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Operations Congressional Budget Justification, Fiscal Year 2008*. For more information, see "The Problems of Demining in Chad," IRIN, June 18, 2010.

Prospects

Persistent, if sporadic, conflict with rebels in the north and east; continuing refugee inflows and instability from the conflict in Darfur; and ethnic tensions all contribute to concerns for Chad's future. Under President Déby, Chad has made limited progress toward democracy. Human rights conditions remain notably poor, in part due to the actions of state security forces; freedom of expression is often curtailed; and many critics and observers see the government as lacking in transparency, accountability, and functional capacities. Reports of human right abuses, including sexual violence against women, are particularly high in the country's conflict zones. Some suggest that prospective increases in state oil revenues and multifaceted international assistance to bolster political and economic reform could engender more participatory governance and economic growth in Chad. However, international donor frustration, as evidenced by the World Bank's withdrawal from the pipeline project, may affect future assistance and investment. If the Déby government does not embrace political and economic reforms, popular resentment against those in power may perpetuate the current instability.

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