3.1

Chad and the Central African Republic

The deployment of parallel United Nations and European Union peace operations to Chad's and the Central African Republic's borders with Sudan in 2008 did little to improve the security and humanitarian situations in either country. The conditions of the refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) remained unchanged as insecurity persisted. The Darfur crisis, which eluded all forms of resolution during the year, continued to complicate efforts to resolve the conflicts in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR). In the midst of these challenges, the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the EU Force in the Republic of Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR TCHAD/RCA) remained deployed but with no mandate to address the political issues that underpin the conflicts. Moreover, both missions were impacted by continued tensions between Chad and Sudan that were heightened by reciprocal attacks on the two countries' capitals by rebel forces, leading to finger-pointing between the feuding neighbors. In the face of these challenges, the UN and EU explored plans for a smooth transition at the culmination of EUFOR's one-year mandate. This would see an enhanced MINURCAT assume military responsibilities from EUFOR. However, failure to deal with the political underpinnings of the conflicts—especially in Chad—will likely remain a source of serious concern for the coming year.

Background

Chad and the CAR have faced serious internal insecurity for decades, exacerbated in recent years by the spillover from the ongoing conflict in Darfur. Since independence, Chad has been rocked by a series of coups, the most recent of which brought the current president, Idris Déby, to power in 1990. Despite a number of elections in the interim, the Chadian government is not widely viewed as truly representative, and over the years both political and violent opposition has mounted. Increasingly well-organized rebel groups have capitalized on regional instability and porous borders, and have consolidated their resistance through a number of high-level military defections.

While clashes between government and rebel forces have been responsible for the overall insecurity, the situation has been worsened by acts of banditry, ethnic and intercommunal violence, and a pervading environment of impunity. Armed groups, some of whom have crossed into Chad from Darfur, are responsible for attacking and looting villages, and for driving Chadian civilians off of their land. The combination of these destabilizing forces has led to massive internal displacement and has hampered the delivery of humanitarian assistance to both Chadian IDPs and refugees from Darfur, currently residing in camps in eastern Chad.

In the CAR, internal conflict throughout the 1990s prompted the deployment of a series of international and regional peace operations to address a situation characterized by a series of army mutinies, coup attempts, and armed rebellions aided or encouraged by the country's neighbors. The UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) was replaced in 2000 by the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), which sought to consolidate the gains of a 1999 election. BONUCA's mandate was to support the CAR government's efforts to strengthen

democratic institutions, consolidate national reconciliation processes, and mobilize international support and financial resources for development efforts.

Following a steep deterioration of security in 2002, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community deployed the Force Multinational de la Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale (FOMUC), a regional peacekeeping force of 380 troops from Chad, Gabon, and the Congo with a mandate to support stability and the reconstruction of the Central African Armed Forces. FOMUC has had neither the mandate nor the capacity to bring stability to the CAR.[1]

BONUCA continues to operate in the CAR today, and has expanded its activities to support the government's efforts to reform the security sector, reinforce the rule of law, and disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate ex-combatants. A particular focus during 2008 was an effort to promote an all-inclusive political dialogue involving opposition leaders as well as representatives of the country's several rebel groups. Meanwhile, in June 2008, the CAR became the fourth country to be placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

In a December 2006 report, then–Secretary-General Kofi Annan proposed the deployment of a peacekeeping operation to monitor movements in the border areas, while working to improve security through the facilitation of political dialogue and the protection of civilians under imminent threat. While this proposal was

MINURCAT and EUFOR TCHAD/RCA Area of Operations

Monitoring area

Map No. 4346   UNITED NATIONS
October 2008

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

3.1.1 Zoe's Ark

An unusual controversy, with implications for peacekeeping and humanitarian activities in Chad, began in late 2007 and carried over well into 2008. In November 2007, a group of French citizens calling themselves "Zoe's Ark" attempted to remove 103 children and infants from Chadian territory near the border with Darfur, claiming that the children were Darfurian refugees.

The group was arrested as they attempted to load the kidnapped children onto a plane, all of whom were later established to be the children of Chadian citizens and not from Darfur at all. The popular backlash against the group, and indeed against all international actors inside Chad, was immediate and violent. Humanitarian staff and UN personnel from Western countries were attacked, further

disrupting the already difficult delivery of humanitarian programs. The legacy of this event has been a heightened mistrust of international—and specifically humanitarian—actors and the introduction of new bureaucratic regulations designed to monitor the movement of humanitarian staff and the operation of aid programs.

**UN Mission in the Central African Republic
and Chad (MINURCAT)**

- Authorization and   25 September 2007 (UNSC Res. 1778)
  Start Date
- SRSG   Victor Da Silva Angelo (Portugal)
- Chief Military Liaison   François N'Diaye (Senegal)
  Officer
- Police Commissioner   Gerardo Cristian Chaumont (Argentina)
- Budget $301.1 million
                           (1 July 2008–30 June 2009)
- Strength as of   Military Liaison Officers: 46
  31 October 2008   Police: 236
                           International Civilian Staff: 307
                           Local Civilian Staff: 169
                           UN Volunteers: 77

For detailed mission information see p. 208

**EU Force in the Republic of Chad and the
Central African Republic (EUFOR TCHAD/RCA)**

- Authorization Date   15 October 2007 (EU Council Joint
                           Action 2007/677/CFSP)
- Start Date   January 2008
- Head of Mission   Lieutenant-General Patrick Nash (Ireland)
- Budget $98.5 million
                           (October 2007–September 2008)
- Strength as of   Troops: 3,307
  30 September 2008

**UN Peacebuilding Support Office in the
Central African Republic (BONUCA)**

- Authorization and   15 February 2000 (S/PRST/2000/5)
  Start Date
- Strength as of   International Civilian Staff: 24
  31 October 2008   Local Civilian Staff: 54

welcomed by President François Bozizé of the CAR, it was rejected by Chad's President Déby, who was concerned that the UN was trying to turn Chad into a rear base for operations aimed at addressing the conflict in Darfur. Déby requested an all-civilian police force instead.

After considerable discussion and debate, an agreement was reached that led to the simultaneous deployment of a UN civilian peacekeeping operation, and an EU military "bridging" force in eastern Chad and northeastern CAR.

Authorized by Security Council Resolution 1778 (2007), MINURCAT, when fully deployed, was to comprise 300 civilian police and 50 military liaison officers in addition to appropriate civilian personnel. The mission was mandated to select, train, vet, and advise elements of the Chadian police force (a force that would come to be called the Détachement Intégré de Sécurité [DIS]), and to provide security in and around refugee and IDP sites in eastern Chad and northeastern CAR. Invoking Chapter VII of the UN Charter, Resolution 1778 also authorized the European Union to deploy a military peacekeeping operation alongside MINURCAT. The European mission (EUFOR) was mandated to contribute to the protection of civilians in danger, establish wider security with a view to facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and contribute to the protection of UN and humanitarian personnel.

As of October 2008, EUFOR—deployed just for a year—had reached full strength with 3,307 troops, of whom 200 were deployed to northeastern CAR. MINURCAT had yet to deploy fully, and of the expected 850 DIS officers, 418 had been trained—including some 71 commanding officers—and the remaining DIS training and deployment was expected to continue into 2009.

Key Developments

The conflicts in Chad, the CAR, and Sudan have a strong regional dimension, and the difficult relationship between Chad and Sudan proved to be one of the central drivers of conflict throughout 2008. For years, there have been allegations that the governments of Sudan and Chad have been a source of material support and safe haven to rebel groups fighting in their respective countries. But recent developments in both Chad and Darfur have brought these allegations to the fore.

Chad

The long and largely uncontrolled border between Sudan and Chad has been an issue of particular concern. Rebels from both sides of the border have been known to use the neighboring territory as a rear base to recruit, train, and regroup for battle. Accusations of Sudanese support to Chadian rebels, and vice versa, came to a head in 2008, with major offensives being launched against the capitals of both Chad and Sudan.

In February 2008, rebel groups in Chad joined forces to launch a coordinated attack on the capital, N'Djamena. The attack originated from the border region between Chad and Sudan, and it was alleged that Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebels from Darfur—long believed to have benefited from the support of the Chadian government—entered Chad to reinforce the Chadian national army. Rebel fighters reached the gates of the presidential palace, but the attack was repelled with the help of French forces.

This daring move by the rebels further eroded already poor relations between Chad and Sudan, leading to the breaking off of diplomatic ties. In an effort to normalize relations, discussions moderated by Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade were initiated in Dakar in March 2008. The result was a commitment to normalize relations and to "ban any activity of the armed groups and prevent the use of the territories of any of the two countries to destabilize the other,"[2] as well as the formation of a Contact Group, jointly chaired by Libya, Eritrea, and the Republic of Congo, to monitor the implementation of the agreement. The group was also charged with the formation of a "peace and security force" to monitor and secure the borders between the two countries.

The signing of the Dakar Agreement by Sudanese and Chadian authorities was met with skepticism by observers who noted that peace agreements between these countries were almost always followed by a resurgence of violence. This skepticism seemed warranted when, in May 2008, JEM rebels launched an unprecedented attack on Khartoum, reaching Omdurman on the outskirts of the capital. As in Chad, the speed with which the rebels attacked suggested that they had received outside support. The government of Sudan immediately accused Chad of providing JEM with the means to launch the attack and again broke off diplomatic relations with Chad.

Following a September 2008 meeting of the Contact Group in Libreville, Gabon, the presidents of Chad and Sudan expressed a renewed commitment to the Dakar Agreement, including an intention to normalize relations and to finalize an experts' report meant to delineate the concept of operations for the border monitoring force, as recommended in the Dakar Agreement. The force will, in theory, be drawn from the countries that compose the Contact Group. However, coordination and financial arrangements are still unclear, and it is generally believed that the deployment of this force will be largely contingent upon a marked improvement in relations between Chad and Sudan. Diplomatic ties between the two countries were reestablished in October.

In addition to the regional developments, there has been some limited progress toward the fulfillment of certain internal peace agreements within Chad and, perhaps most notably, the CAR.

Central African Republic

Following recommendations made by a preparatory committee of the inclusive political dialogue, the government signed peace agreements with the Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie (APRD) in May 2008 and with the APRD and the Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement (UFDR) in June. In early August, both the main coalition of opposition political parties and the rebel groups withdrew from the dialogue process over dissatisfaction with amnesty proposals put forward by the government, necessary for the participation of rebel and other leaders in the dialogue. Some of these problems were overcome in a new amnesty proposal approved by parliament in late September, and in early November President Bozizé announced that the dialogue would take place in December.

Another important dimension to the unfolding situation in Chad and the CAR is the role in and influence of France on the central African region. The ex-colonial power continues to be actively engaged in both countries, with an ongoing military presence and a history of intervention on behalf of the respective governments. In both the CAR and Chad, French forces stationed in the countries were "rehatted" to serve under the auspices of the EUFOR mission. However, France's record of intervention in defense of President Déby in particular continues to generate skepticism over its ability to remain impartial if the Chadian government comes under serious threat.

The skepticism was further fueled when, in February 2008, even as European forces were deploying to Chad, France sought and received the tacit support of the UN Security Council to defend the Chadian government when the rebels entered the capital, N'Djamena.[3]

From FOMUC to MICOPAX
While both MINURCAT and EUFOR are deployed in the CAR as well as Chad, their presence in the CAR is much more limited, contained entirely to the northeast, where the CAR borders Sudan.

The internal stabilization and peacebuilding dynamics of the CAR have, for some years now, been the remit of BONUCA and FOMUC, the latter a multinational peacekeeping presence led by the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). When initially authorized in late 2002, FOMUC was intended to support a process of national reconciliation and to contribute to the stabilization of the country, by monitoring the border between Chad and the CAR, initiating a disarmament process, and protecting key infrastructure. However, from the very outset, FOMUC was severely underresourced; this fact was highlighted in March 2003 when, three months after its deployment, FOMUC was unable to prevent General François Bozizé's ousting of President Ange-Félix Patassé in a military coup launched from Chad.

In July 2008, CEMAC handed over operational authority of FOMUC to the Mission de Consolidation de la Paix (MICOPAX), to be led by the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC). It was hoped that this transition would bring a greater number of regional actors into the effort to stabilize the CAR.

The MICOPAX mandate has yet to be formally approved, and as 2008 drew to a close, MICOPAX continued to operate under FOMUC's mandate. However, the mission will take on a much more multidimensional character than its predecessor, incorporating combat troops, civilian police and gendarmes, as well as a civilian component. It is hoped that the new civilian component will play a positive role in reinvigorating political dialogue in the CAR.

Both FOMUC and MICOPAX worked collaboratively in 2008 with UN bodies, particularly in Bangui. It is expected that MICOPAX will collaborate closely with BONUCA in the effort to achieve the political and stabilization objectives in their respective mandates. While EUFOR and MINURCAT are both present in northeastern CAR, the MINURCAT deployment in particular continues to be minimal, with limited cooperation and dialogue between it and the other missions.

UN-EU Partnership?
Though the simultaneous deployment of EU and UN operations is not unprecedented, it is unusual, and the lessons learned from the experience in Chad and the CAR are expected to inform future collaborations between the UN and the EU.

The EU's involvement in this effort was politically complex, and carries as much relevance for the future of European peacekeeping intervention as it does for Chadian security and stability. The EU intervention in Chad was approached as a template for future EU peacekeeping interventions, a fact that had implications in the planning stages, particularly with regard to the degree to which UN planners were included in the EU planning process.

The decision to deploy an EU force in Chad resulted from Chad's refusal to consent to the deployment of UN troops. Consequently, by the time the EU decided to deploy to Chad, UN planners had already undertaken a number of detailed technical assessment missions to evaluate

conditions on the ground. In the wake of Security Council Resolution 1778, and in the context of a longer UN discussion about the deployment of a single, multidimensional peacekeeping operation, UN staff viewed the EU force as a component of a larger UN-led intervention.

Conversely, the EU planners approached the EU mission as a parallel deployment of two discreet, if complementary, peacekeeping missions. Interactions with the government of Chad were not approached in a coordinated or collaborative manner, and the terms of reference for each respective mission were elaborated separately, a fact that resulted in delays in the finalization of certain technical agreements.[4]

At the field level, the gaps in coordination, different rates of deployment, and the UN Security Council's tendency to view the intervention in Chad as a subsidiary of the more prominent effort in Darfur, had very practical implications for UN and humanitarian actors.

In June 2008, a rebel attack on the town of Goz Beida in Chad prompted the deployment of EUFOR troops to protect civilians and evacuate humanitarian personnel. In the wake of the evacuation, serious concerns were raised over the apparent lack of a coordinated security plan. Though MINURCAT had a small team on the ground, the slow pace of deployment meant that a crucial link between EUFOR and the humanitarian community was missing, and the commanding EUFOR officers were forced to improvise their response.

In addition to the coordination challenges, it became clear early on in the EUFOR deployment that this well-resourced and highly trained military force was almost entirely unequipped to address the day-to-day security issues that plague the region. Configured to confront a military threat, the European force has neither the mandate, nor the resources to combat the banditry that is at the heart of the insecurity in eastern Chad.[5] The force was designed and deployed primarily with a view to protecting refugees and IDPs from attacks emanating from Darfur, and was poorly configured to Chad's internal security dysfunctions.

Once deployed, EUFOR attempted to adapt the existing mandate to the day-to-day realities.

Mission de Consolidation de la Paix (MICOPAX)

- Authorization Date   2 October 2002
- Start Date   January 2003
- Head of Mission   Albert Akouéndéngué (Gabon)
- Budget $19.3 million
  (October 2007–September 2008)
- Strength as of   Troops: 498
  30 September 2008   Civilian Police: 170

ISSOUF SANOGO/AFP/Getty Images

Members of EUFOR TCHAD/RCA speak with villagers while on patrol near the Farchana camp in eastern Chad, 27 June 2008.

With deployments concentrated in Abeche, Goz Beida, and Iriba, EUFOR commanders instituted long-distance patrols, and attempted to target corridors that are central to the distribution of humanitarian assistance. The strategy has had some positive impact, but EUFOR, with limited troop numbers and a huge, logistically prohibitive area of operations, is constrained in its ability to provide ongoing security.

In June 2008, a joint EU-UN assessment team traveled to Chad and the CAR to conduct a midmandate review and begin preparations for the September 2008 Security Council discussions on the renewal and adjustment of the MINURCAT mandate. While it was generally agreed that the EUFOR deployment did not

address the core security challenges, it was nevertheless determined that a military capability with the means to project itself quickly and effectively throughout the area of operation would be necessary to confront the ongoing cross-border violence, and to provide for the protection of civilians and humanitarian actors in the instance of a violent attack.

In his September 2008 report on the situation in Chad and the CAR, the Secretary-General outlined an expanded MINURCAT mission concept, including a Chapter VII mandate to protect civilians, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and protect UN staff and resources. This concept describes a strategy of deterrence through presence that, given the size and harsh nature of the terrain, will require extensive aerial mobility assets (primarily helicopters) and a strong intelligence-gathering capability. The force size outlined by the Secretary-General includes 6,000 UN peacekeepers, as well as an additional "over the horizon" response capability. In October 2008, President Déby accepted the proposed expanded UN mission.

For its part, the government of Chad requested that the total DIS deployment be increased from 850 to 1,700 officers, a request that was to be reevaluated once the initial 850 officers had taken up their posts.

There are a number of challenges that may be associated with the generation of the follow-on force. From a logistical standpoint, it is estimated that it would take the UN approximately one year to construct the necessary infrastructure to launch the mission that the Secretary-General has described. As such, the Secretary-General's report emphasized the importance of a smooth transition from EUFOR to the expanded MINURCAT, and in particular requested that the government of Chad ensure a full handover of all EUFOR bases and installations to UN control.

Some of the existing EUFOR soldiers are expected to be "rehatted" as MINURCAT troops, alleviating some of the pressure for force generation. However, the Secretary-General's mission concept relies heavily on the availability of helicopters and other aviation assets, resources that have increasingly proved difficult to secure.

On 24 September 2008, the UN Security Council voted in support of a resolution (1834) expressing the intention to expand the MINURCAT mandate to include a military component upon the expiration of the EUFOR mandate, and calling on the UN and the EU to begin preparations for the transfer of authority from an EU to a UN peacekeeping presence as of 15 March 2009. The precise size and shape of the expanded MINURCAT deployment remain unclear.[6]

Conclusion

As 2008 drew to a close, resolution of the interrelated conflicts in Chad and the CAR remained a work in progress. Despite efforts to enhance MINURCAT, the UN, at the insistence of Chad, lacks an explicit political role for MINURCAT in the effort to resolve Chad's internal political instability. International human rights and humanitarian advocates have called upon the UN to give MINURCAT the mandate to initiate an inclusive political dialogue between the government of Chad, the political opposition, and the numerous armed opposition groups operating in the country. The government of Chad, however, is resistant to formal UN involvement in its domestic politics, and the international community has so far proven unwilling to press the point. In the meantime, while the situation in the CAR saw some modest improvements, it was far from resolved, but a peace and reconciliation conference convened in December, involving some of the key actors in the conflict, raised hopes.

Notes

1. United Nations, *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),* UN Doc. S/2006/1019, 22 December 2006, p. 4.

2. Republic of Senegal, *Dakar Agreement Between Sudan and Chad Signed in Dakar,* 13 March 2008, para. 4.

3. United Nations, *Statement by the President of the Security Council,* UN Doc. S/PRST/2008/3, 4 February 2008.

4. United Nations, *Action Review* (UN-EU planning for EUFOR TCHAD/RCA), June 2007–March 2008, p. 2.

5. United Nations, *Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad,* UN Doc. S/2008/601, 12 September 2008.

6. UN Security Council Resolution 1843, UN Doc. S/RES/1834, 24 September 2008.