

Chad and the Central African Republic

The UN Mission in Chad and the Central African Republic (MINURCAT) ceased operating during 2010. Following the withdrawal of consent for the mission by the Chadian government in early 2010, the UN Security Council negotiated the withdrawal of MINURCAT by year-end, with a full transfer of responsibilities to fledgling Chadian security and judicial institutions. This sudden transition has occurred amid rampant banditry and insecurity among those living in the country's eastern border areas and those actors mandated to deliver humanitarian relief to the substantial refugee and internally displaced populations there. Considering this situation along with possible volatility stemming from the developing situation in neighboring Sudan, MINURCAT's withdrawal could potentially result in a further deterioration of human security and regional stability during 2011.

Background

Chad is currently host to roughly 255,000 refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan and more than 64,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR), to the south. More refugees continue to arrive every month, and with violent insecurity still prevalent in both Sudan and the CAR, the prospects for their return are not improving.

The eastern region of Chad is also host to roughly 168,000 internally displaced people, most originating from the border area and driven from their homes by cross-border attacks originating inside Sudan. Like the refugees, the Chadian internally displaced persons (IDPs) continue to face violence in return areas and so they remain in displacement sites, dependent on international assistance.

Beginning in 2005, eastern Chad has been the site of daily violence—violence involving theft and affecting individuals and aid workers alike—as well as rebel movements associated with the ongoing Chadian civil war. Banditry with impunity continues to be widespread, the result of a lack of functioning legal and judicial institutions. This has been exacerbated by ethnic tensions and tremendous disparities in wealth and regional development. Deep divisions and unequal power dynamics between ethnic groups continue as well.

By late 2006, the UN Security Council, consumed by the unfolding crisis in Darfur, was yet unable to negotiate the deployment of peacekeepers into Darfur itself. Discussions about a future peace operation in Chad were focused on the border area, where violence was most acute. In the long-standing tension between Chad and Sudan, there has been a history of coups being launched from safe havens in the neighboring country. This focus proved once again to be well founded when, in 2008, a Chadian rebel attack mounted from inside Darfur was nearly successful in unseating the Chadian government, and a Darfurian rebel offensive from a rear base inside Chad became the first-ever direct attack on the Sudanese capital.

Meanwhile, the Central African Republic, Chad's southern neighbor state, continued to suffer instability, as a result of decades of mutinies, rebellions, and military interventions by its neighbors.

In 2008, a political dialogue between the government of the CAR, the political opposition, and rebel leaders aimed to bring an end to the chronic violence and instability in the country. However, alleged failures on the part of the government to implement agreements forged

in the dialogue caused rebel groups to resume armed activity early in 2009.

The Evolution of Peacekeeping in Chad and the CAR

EUFOR and MINURCAT

Calls for an international peacekeeping deployment in Chad and the CAR were precipitated in 2005 and 2006 by the mass internal displacement caused by cross-border attacks by Sudan-based militias. Prevailing violence was threatening the humanitarian response that the refugee and IDP communities were dependent on, and tension between local Chadian groups and the large, rapidly growing Darfurian refugee population was causing insecurity in the large refugee camps concentrated in the east of the country.

In addition to the protection of civilians in eastern Chad and northeastern CAR, the initial UN Secretariat proposal for a possible UN deployment in 2007 was much broader than the mandate that was eventually to be adopted. The proposal included provisions for a border-monitoring role on the axis between Chad and Sudan as well as an official role in the facilitation of an internal Chadian political dialogue to bring about the end of the civil war. While the government of the CAR was amenable to the proposal, the Chadian government strenuously resisted any mention of Chadian internal politics or a UN role in border monitoring, and in the end neither of these responsibilities was included in the mandate.

Only after serious debate and pressure from their French allies did the government of Chad agree to the deployment of peacekeepers on its soil, and even then the government consented to European Union (EU) troops, not UN peacekeepers.

In September 2007, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1778, which reflected the compromise struck between the government of Chad, the UN, and the EU. The resolution authorized the deployment of 300 UN civilian police, 50 military liaison officers, and a small



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number of civilian support personnel. It also authorized a twelve-month deployment of an EU “bridging force,” which was meant to fill the emergency gap and establish the foundation for a possible follow-on UN mission while negotiations about the authorization of that mission continued.

The EU peacekeeping force (EUFOR) began to deploy in February of 2008 and was declared operational on 15 March of the same year. EUFOR consisted of an authorized strength

of 3,307 EU soldiers (3,107 in Chad and 200 in northeastern CAR). Acting under a Chapter VII mandate, the EUFOR soldiers were called upon to establish broad area security in their area of operations, to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to protect UN staff and humanitarian personnel.

In January 2009, just two months before the agreed end of EUFOR's deployment, the UN Security Council adopted a mandate authorizing the deployment of up to 5,200 UN troops and 300 UN police, 25 military officers, and sufficient civilian staff to support the full range of activities involved in a multidimensional peacekeeping operation.

The UN mission, known by the French acronym MINURCAT, was mandated to take over the major military tasks performed by EUFOR, including wide area security, support to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and the protection of civilians under imminent threat. The mission also included an active human rights monitoring element, as well as a section dedicated to strengthening the weak Chadian legal and judicial sectors.

The mandate also detailed the creation and support of an entity called the *Détachement Intègre de Sécurité* (DIS), which was designed

to counter the law-and-order vacuum in and around the refugee camps. DIS recruits were first identified by the government of Chad from among the ranks of the existing Chadian police, military, and gendarmerie. These recruits were then given training, equipment, and on-the-job mentoring by UN civilian police. This was a creative way to create a well-trained, well-monitored police force with the authority to conduct investigations and arrests as part of the Chadian security structure.

On 15 March 2009, roughly 1,877 EUFOR soldiers were "re-hatted" and placed under UN command. These forces were drawn primarily from France, Poland, and Ireland, but also included smaller contingents from Albania, Austria, Croatia, Finland, and Russia. Over the course of 2010, MINURCAT troop numbers were supplemented by contributions from some thirty-five troop-contributing countries.

Key Developments

Chad

A series of successful government offensives against rebel groups throughout 2009 and 2010 have significantly weakened the rebel movement in eastern Chad.

After a number of failed peace agreements, President Déby's February 2010 visit to Khartoum produced a rapprochement between the two countries that continues to hold. The border, which had been officially closed for seven years, was reopened in April 2010 and a 3,000-strong soldier Joint Border Force was established.

Evidence of improved Chad/Sudan relations have manifested in a more difficult operating environment for both Chadian and Sudanese rebel groups, which have historically found support in their respective neighboring territories. In May, the Chadian government refused entry into the country for Khalil Ibrahim, a leader of a Sudanese rebel group, the Justice and Equality Movement, and in May the Sudanese government expelled three Chadian rebel leaders.

In a high-profile, widely criticized decision, the Chadian government also refused to arrest

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

Authorization and Start Date	25 September 2007 (UNSC Res. 1778)
SRSG	Youssef Mahmoud (Tunisia)
Force Commander	Major-General Elhadji Mouhamedou Kandji (Senegal)
Police Commissioner	Mamadou Mountaga Diallo (Guinea)
Budget	\$215.0 million (1 July 2010–30 June 2011)
Strength as of 31 October 2010	Military Observers: 20 Troops: 1,327 Police: 109 International Civilian Staff: 354 Local Civilian Staff: 585 UN Volunteers: 147

For detailed mission information see p. 176

Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir when he traveled to Chad for a regional summit, in spite of Chad's obligations as a signatory to the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the ICC warrants out for President Bashir's arrest.

Withdrawal of Chadian Consent

In January 2010, the government of Chad withdrew its consent that had allowed EUFOR to transition into a militarized MINURCAT and asked that the Security Council not renew the mandate for MINURCAT, which was set to expire in March. The Chadian government cited the incomplete troop deployment—only 3,749¹ of the full authorized strength of 5,500 military and police officers were deployed at that point—and alleged that the mission was incompetent to fulfill its mandate. The government asserted that, following the weakening of the rebel forces, as well as the rapprochement with Sudan, Chadian security forces would be in a better position to take up the protection role that the peacekeepers had been mandated to play.

In June, a joint government of Chad/UN High-Level Working Group was established to assess the security situation with respect to the protection of civilians and to manage issues relating to the transition of protection tasks from MINURCAT to government forces. In particular, the High-Level Working Group was tasked with planning for the transition of the DIS from a force significantly supported by MINURCAT to a fully autonomous, Chadian-run policing body.

A joint technical working group was appointed by the High-Level Working Group and began discussions pertaining to the long-term financial support of the DIS. As of July 2010, only \$6.9 million of the \$21.7 million needed to run the DIS had been received, raising questions about the sustainability of the DIS and its ability to fill the potential security vacuum in the absence of MINURCAT.

A new body—called the Bureau de Sécurité et des Mouvements (BSM)—was created within the Chadian government in order to coordinate the DIS and manage requests for escorts by humanitarian actors. Concurrently, the



An armed member of the joint Sudanese-Chad border security forces is pictured in the West Darfur town of Jebel Moon, 7 November 2010.

DIS has increased the number of patrols, day and night, conducted in and around the IDP and refugee camps and has increased the number of escorts provided in an effort to maintain the flow of humanitarian assistance. The BSM was also charged with the coordination between the DIS, other law enforcement agencies, and humanitarian protection actors.

The government of Chad also began hosting a series of Humanitarian Dialogue Forums between the government, humanitarian actors, MINURCAT, and the local media and intended to establish a “shared understanding of the concept and practice of the protection of civilians.”

The Central African Republic

In 2010, the CAR was set to host presidential and parliamentary elections; however, the polls, first scheduled for April and then postponed twice—first to later in April and then to October—seem to have been put on hold again. President François Bozizé—who will stand for reelection—has cited security concerns. It is unclear if the elections will take place before the end of the year.

The security situation in the MINURCAT area of operations—the northeast of the CAR—continues to be characterized by ethnic divisions,

banditry, and cross-border crime. Also, three armed groups are currently operating in the area, resulting in the displacement of some 64,000 Central African civilians into Chad.

The threat that Central African instability poses for the region is largely limited to banditry. Cross-border rebel incursions have not occurred since 2006. However, the threat of violent attacks against civilians—including refugees and IDP and humanitarian staff—remains a daily concern.

The CAR currently hosts roughly 950² refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the south, as well as some 197,000³ internally displaced people. This is the result of the violent attacks perpetrated against civilians in both northeastern DRC and the southern CAR by the Ugandan militia called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA is known to be operating in southern Sudan as well, and the regional dimension of this threat has prompted calls for closer collaboration between the UN peacekeeping operations with a presence in Sudan, the DRC, and the CAR.

UN Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding in the CAR

The UN peacebuilding support office in the CAR—called BONUCA—was mandated to provide support to the development of democratic institutions as well as the national reconciliation processes aimed at stabilizing the country. In 2009, the mandate of BONUCA was expanded to include support for the reform of security sector institutions as well as the rule of law. BONUCA was also tasked with providing support to the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants.

Increased engagement on the part of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and a perceived need to enhance coordination with MINURCAT (which is headquartered in the Chadian capital of N'djamena) precipitated a 1 January 2010 handover of responsibility from BONUCA to the new integrated peacebuilding office, BINUCA. In addition to its regional coordination role, the new office—like its predecessor—is mandated

to support national reconciliation and DDR efforts in the CAR.

In addition to the UN presence there, the CAR is also host to MICOPAX, the peacekeeping force mounted by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). MICOPAX includes 527 combat troops, as well as civilian police, civilian staff, and gendarmes. The mission coordinates with BINUCA staff and is mandated to promote peace, stability, and respect for human rights, while providing support to reconciliation efforts and electoral planning.

MINURCAT Transition

This has been a year of transition for MINURCAT. In January the government called for the withdrawal of the mission, and while the government initially called for complete withdrawal by June 2010, a last-minute agreement between President Déby and the UN Security Council allowed for an extension of some parts of the MINURCAT mandate until October 2010. Even with the extension, the mandated troop strength was reduced to a maximum of 1,900 soldiers in Chad and 300 in the Central African Republic. The final withdrawal of all remaining troops began on 15 October and is expected to be completed by 31 December 2010.

MINURCAT's new mandate held implications for the mission's concept of operations and the rules of engagement, which were revised to reflect changes in the mission's mandated tasks. The new mandate authorized significant changes to the protection-of-civilians tasks, specifically limiting the geographic scope of this protection from the mission's full area of operations to just the "immediate vicinity" of MINURCAT forces.

All area security patrols ceased as of 27 May, and all humanitarian security escorts have been taken over by the DIS. MINURCAT forces continued to provide security for UN personnel, facilities, and assets, as well as escorts for UN military carrying out enabling support functions, medical evacuations for UN staff, and the extraction of humanitarian actors in danger. The mission continued to maintain

a quick reaction force to respond in case of emergencies.

In addition to the residual military tasks still being performed by the peacekeepers in the last months of 2010, MINURCAT continued to support the development of credible police and judicial institutions in the east. The mission worked simultaneously with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to develop a responsible drawdown strategy.

In advance of its departure, the mission completed the training of 158 nonprofessional justices of the peace in May 2010 and continues to rehabilitate courts through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in a number of central towns in eastern Chad. MINURCAT rule-of-law experts are also providing funding and technical support to reinforce the legal-aid services provided at the Maison des Avocats in Abeche. The mission is also mobilizing local NGOs to ensure the continuity and expansion of legal-aid services throughout the east.

Human rights monitoring continued in refugee camps, and MINURCAT staff continued to build capacity among Chadian authorities and civil society organizations to carry out human rights monitoring and advocacy after the mission's withdrawal.

Despite MINURCAT's efforts, eastern Chad remained host to acute insecurity that resulted in the need to temporarily suspend or modify humanitarian activities, and in some cases has led to the withdrawal of humanitarian staff. Furthermore, additional problems such as food shortages (the result of poor rainfall) are exacerbating the scale of humanitarian need, and the continued presence and ongoing arrival of

Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in Central African Republic (MICOPAX)

Authorization Date	October 2002
Start Date	January 2003
Head of Mission	Albert Akouéngué (Gabon)
Budget	\$57.3 million (1 October 2009–30 September 2010)
Strength as of 30 September 2010	Troops: 551 Civilian Police: 150

new refugees is placing serious strains on the scarce natural resources in refugee host areas.

Conclusion

Amid government assurances that the security situation is under control and plans for MINURCAT—a mission precipitated by calls for civilian protection assistance—to hand over responsibility to Chad's security and justice bodies, the security situation remains volatile for civilians and humanitarian staff. The persistent banditry—including carjacking, violent armed robbery, and increasingly frequent abductions—as well as the pervasive climate of impunity has resulted in a reduction of humanitarian access and constitutes a threat to the availability of critical assistance in Chad's refugee and IDP camps. While these perpetrations were widespread when the mission was deployed, the potential for them to increase even further once MINURCAT's transition is complete is a distinct possibility during 2011.

Notes

1. UN Missions contributions by country, 31 January 2010—http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2010/jan10_5.pdf
2. 2010-11 UNHCR Planning Figures for Central African Republic—<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e45c156>.
3. Ibid.