

CHAD

Civilians under attack

Darfur conflict spreads to eastern Chad

“A man in green uniform came and shot the men one by one along the line in the head.”

Testimony of a 14-year-old girl

“First they took my child from me and threw her on the ground. Then two of the men raped me.”

Testimony of a displaced woman

The conflict in Darfur has spread to eastern Chad. Several thousand people have been killed. Thousands of women and girls have been raped. Entire villages have been pillaged and destroyed and their inhabitants have been forcibly displaced. Eastern Chad is in the grip of a human rights and humanitarian crisis, which has caused the mass exodus of entire populations.



Two women from the village of Djorlo, eastern Chad, who say that they witnessed fellow villagers being raped by Janjawid militiamen, November 2006

Who is responsible for these terrible abuses? The main perpetrators are militias known as the Janjawid, some of whom come from Sudan, some from Chad, along with other Chadian armed groups.

The climate of insecurity is increasing tensions between communities considered to be “arabs” and communities considered “non-arabs”. At the same time, Sudan and Chad accuse each other of sponsoring, harbouring and arming opposition armed groups. Relations have deteriorated to the point that, on 28 November 2006, the government of Chad declared that it was in a “state of war” with Sudan.

The increasing insecurity has also meant that most of the essential international and local staff of UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations working in eastern Chad have been relocated. Since December 2006 they have been operating from Abeche (the main town in eastern Chad) or N'Djamena (Chad's capital city).

International law - responsibility to protect

Under international law, parties to an armed conflict have a responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians.

Deliberately targeting civilians in a situation of armed conflict is a flagrant violation of international law. It is a war crime. In some circumstances it could be a crime against humanity.



How many people are displaced?

Population of Chad	10 million
Refugees from Darfur	230,000
Refugees from Central African Republic	46,000
Internally displaced people within Chad	110,000

Source: UNHCR January – February 2007

War crimes are defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. They include :

“Wilful killing; Torture or inhuman treatment; Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly; Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities.”

Crimes against humanity are :

“Acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack such as: murder, extermination, torture, rape or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity, persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law.”

The government of Chad has a duty to protect civilians present on its soil. This duty does not cease to exist because of an armed conflict.

Unlawful killings

There was a grave escalation in violence during the second half of 2006. The civilian population suffered an increasing number of deliberate and targeted attacks committed by Janjawid militias crossing over from Sudan and by local Chadian arab and non-arab armed groups.

In November 2006, a 14-year-old girl talked to Amnesty International delegates about the killing of 19 men outside the village of Wiririké.

She said:

“They then walked us towards the Wadai village of Wiririké and took us to the field just outside. There were 19 men with their arms tied behind their backs. There were maybe 50 or so armed men.

“A man in green uniform came and shot the men one by one along the line in the head. One bullet did not work and so he used a stick and smashed the head of the man until he was dead. They were all killed.”

Rape: a weapon of war

Thousands of women and girls have been raped by members of militias and armed groups.

They are particularly vulnerable when they are outside the fragile safety of their village or settlement. These rapes are deliberate acts of war aimed at humiliating and instilling fear in the communities under attack.

A woman from Koloy described to Amnesty International delegates how she was raped outside Gouroukoun displacement site.



“On the 20th day of Ramadan this year [13 October 2006], as I was looking for wood with two other women, we came across five armed men.

“Three were wearing white and two were in green uniforms.

“They asked us where we came from and we told them from Goz Beida. They asked us again where we came from and who we were, whether we were displaced or refugees.

“When we said displaced, they said that we were the ones they had been looking for.

“They started to beat us and took our head scarves and sandals. Then they grabbed me and took me away from the two old women I was with; they managed to run away.

“First they took my child from me and threw her on the ground. Then two of the men raped me. Afterwards they left and I picked up my daughter and came back to the camp.

“I have not told anyone what happened to me. If others knew, it could bring me problems with my husband. I do not know how my husband would react if he were to know.”

TAKE ACTION NOW

► Call on the UN Security Council to:

Establish a protection presence in Chad mandated to effectively protect civilians, including the internally displaced and refugees, and to monitor the human rights situation; allocate necessary resources to that force in terms of sufficient personnel, logistics and finances.

► Call on the government of Chad to:

Take all effective measures to protect civilians, including refugees and the internally displaced living in areas adjoining the border with Sudan and vulnerable to attack by Janjawid or other forces.

► Call on the government of Sudan to:

Take all effective measures to disarm the Janjawid in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions 1556, 1654 and 1591; and prevent their further cross-border incursions into Chad.

► Call on the African Union to:

Take steps to ensure that the governments of Chad and Sudan, as well as all the armed groups operating in their territories, respect their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law, in particular those relating to the protection of civilians.



Source: United Nations January 2007

PLEASE SEND YOUR APPEALS TO:

Government of Chad

H.E Idriss Déby Itno
President of Chad
Présidence de la République
N'Djaména
Chad
Fax: +235 51 45 01 or 235 52 44 73
Emails: cprint@intnet.td, sgpr.tchad@intnet.td,
presicom.pr@intnet.td
Salutation: Dear President/Monsieur le Président

Please also send appeals to the Chadian Embassy in your country

Government of Sudan

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
President and Commander-in-Chief of Armed
Forces
President's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan
Fax: +249 183 776603/777583
Salutation: Your Excellency

Please also send appeals to the Sudanese Embassy in your country

UN Security Council

President of the UN Security Council
820 Second Avenue, Suite 1600
New York, NY 10017, United States of America

(February) Permanent Representative, Slovakia
Fax: +1212 286 8419
Email: mission@newyork.mfa.sk

(March) Permanent Representative, South Africa
Fax: + 1-212-692 24 98



The burnt remains of Djourlo, a village destroyed by an armed group in eastern Chad, November 2006

(April) Permanent Representative, United
Kingdom
Fax: + 1212 745 9316
Email: uk@un.int

Salutation: Your Excellency

African Union

Chairperson of the Commission of the African
Union
His Excellency Alpha Oumar Konaré
African Union Headquarters
P.O. Box 3243
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 551 7844
Email: KonareAO@africa-union.org
Salutation: Your Excellency

More information on the human rights situation in Chad can be obtained at
www.amnesty.org

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