



NOREF Report

Chad's relations with Libya, Sudan, France and the US

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Executive summary

President Idriss Déby seized power in Chad in December 1990 following a military coup for which he received extensive support from Libya, Sudan and France. Since then, his relations with those countries have changed dramatically. US relations with Chad have been significantly influenced by two events: the launching of the “war on terror” in 2001 and US oil imports from Chad which began in 2003. This report examines Chad's relations with these four countries which are key to its economic and political development.

Relations between Déby's Chad and Gaddafi's Libya are strong, personalised and friendly, as evidenced by increasing Libyan military support and economic investment in Chad. Libyan military equipment and ammunition were instrumental in helping Déby thwart an attempted coup in February 2008. Gaddafi has also played a central role in securing peace deals between Déby and various rebel movements in Chad as well as between Chad and Sudan.

Relations with Sudan were bellicose from 2003 until 2010, with both Déby's government and that of Omar al-Bashir of Sudan accusing each other of supporting rebel movements that were seeking to topple their respective regimes. During that period, several different peace deals were agreed but failed to last. However, since the signing of a peace deal in January 2010, Chad's relations with its larger neighbour have been calm.

France has provided support to Déby on a number of occasions to prevent him from being ousted, including most recently in February 2008. However, since then, its support has been less unconditional and Chad has become less dependent on its former colonial power. France is still interested in using Chad as a training ground for its military and in maintaining a military presence there to safeguard French citizens and economic interests – both in Chad itself and neighbouring countries – in the event of an emergency.

US anti-terror initiatives in the Sahel mean that Déby's government can count on continued support from the US which sees political stability in Chad as essential for safeguarding both Chadian oil supplies to its domestic market and investments by large US oil companies in the country, as well for curbing the influence of al-Bashir and Islam in the region. Chad receives substantial military assistance from the US, as well as significant USAID funding to assist internally displaced people in eastern Chad. Oil represents over 80% of Chad's exports, with the US being by far the largest purchaser. The US is also the second most important exporter of goods and services to Chad, surpassed only by France. In conclusion, at the beginning of 2011, President Déby seems stronger than ever.

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Introduction

In December 1990 Idriss Déby seized the presidency of Chad from Hissène Habré in a coup for which he received extensive support from Sudan, Libya and France. One of the reasons for Libya and Sudan's active support of Déby was the toppled president's flirtation with the United States. In the case of France, the reasons included Habré's human rights violations and failure to pursue democracy.

Today, 20 years on, the failure of Déby's regime to pursue democracy and respect human rights has incurred international criticism. In 2008 Transparency International considered Chad to be the most corrupt country in Africa. According to Freedom House, rule of law is weak and there is widespread

discrimination and violence against women. On the Ibrahim African Governance Index for 2010, Chad came second to bottom for the whole of Africa, beaten only by Somalia.¹

This report examines Chad's relations with four countries that are key to its economic and political development: Libya, Sudan, France and the US.

¹ The Ibrahim African Governance Index 2010 published on 4 October 2010, http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/en/media/get/20101108_eng-summary-iiag2010-rev-web-2.pdf, accessed 17 February 2011.

Chad and Libya

Military support for Déby

Relations between Chad and Libya, where Muammar Gaddafi has been in power since 1969, deteriorated after the Libyan army invaded the Aouzou strip in northern Chad in 1973, claiming it as Libyan territory. Libya actively supported various rebel movements in Chad with a view to replacing the Chadian regime with one that was pro-Libyan and more Arab- and Muslim-oriented. In 1979, Chadian rebel leader Goukouni Oueddei took over the presidency following a military coup that received active support from Libyan forces. In 1981, the decision by Gaddafi and Goukouni to bring about “complete unity” between Libya and Chad prompted French and US support for the Chadian opposition, resulting in the removal of Goukouni by Habré in a coup in 1982.

At least 40% of Chadian army equipment supplied by Libya in the mid-1990s.

Fighting continued between Chad, heavily supported by France, and Libya over the latter's attempts to annex the Aouzou strip, believed to be rich in uranium deposits. Eventually, in September 1990, Gaddafi and Habré referred the matter to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for a final decision.

From mid-1989 onwards Libya actively supported Idriss Déby and his Patriotic Salvation Movement (PSM) and in December 1990 Déby and his rebel army arrived to take power in the Chadian capital, N'Djamena, equipped with as many as 200 Toyota land cruisers fitted with Soviet-made cannons supplied by Libya. Hundreds of Libyan soldiers held in Chad were soon released and flown to Tripoli in Soviet-built Libyan planes. In the mid-1990s at least 40% of Chadian army equipment reportedly came from Libya.²

In early 1994, the ICJ ruled in favour of Chad and within months Libya withdrew its forces from the Aouzou strip. Since then, Gaddafi's government has

backed Déby militarily by supplying arms and ammunition as needed. According to Chadian newspaper *Ndjama* of 19 August 2008, during the so-called “Battle for N'Djamena” in February 2008 in which rebels had almost succeeded in overthrowing Déby, Libya sent military equipment and ammunition for T-55 tanks and rockets for use on Mi-24 combat helicopters, thereby enabling him to hold on to power. An article in the French magazine *Le Point* on 7 February 2008 reported that the ammunition was collected and flown to Déby's forces by French pilots and planes. Gaddafi was among the first heads of state to condemn the rebel attack on N'Djamena.³ Libya continues to arm the Déby regime.

Diplomatic relations

In the early years of his leadership, Gaddafi used his position to call for a new era of Arab and Muslim unity and espoused “Islamic socialism”. However, from the late 1980s until the mid-1990s, his focus shifted from arabisation and Islamic socialism to securing stability and friendship with his African neighbours.

Indications that Libya was turning towards Africa (rather than the Middle East) included the establishment in 1998 of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) in Tripoli and Gaddafi's campaign to transform the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU). He called for a “United States of Africa” in which colonial borders would be erased. Clear evidence of his orientation towards Africa was his selection as AU chairman in 2009.

Gaddafi has played a central role in conflict resolution and peace deals between Déby's regime and various rebel movements in Chad as well as between Chad and Sudan. Peace deals between the rebels and the government have usually included ending hostilities, granting amnesties to opposition leaders and soldiers and integrating rebel fighters into the national army or civil service.

2 “Chad The Devil Behind The Scenes”, *Time*, 17 December 1990, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,971950,00.html#ixzz18Ma9Ue00>, accessed 21 February 2011.

3 “Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi on Saturday condemned Chadian rebels who have fought their way into N'Djamena in an attempt to overthrow President Idriss Deby”, *Reuters*, 2 February 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/02/02/us-chad-rebels-gaddafi-idUSL0229345120080202>, accessed 21 February 2011.

After the peace deal between Chad and Sudan was signed on 15 January 2010, the International Crisis Group accused Gaddafi of financing the co-optation of opponents into the Déby government. What is more likely, however, is that Libya and Gaddafi

have continued to facilitate negotiations between the Chadian regime and politico-military movements, resulting in many rebel leaders and their soldiers joining the government in N'Djamena.

Peace deals

With rebels

The most recent peace agreements reached between Déby's government and rebels within Chad as a result of mediation by Libya include the following:

24 December 2006: agreement signed in Tripoli between the government and the FUC (United Front for Change) headed by Mahamat Nour (who was appointed Defence Minister on 7 March 2007 but dismissed on 1 December of the same year).

25 October 2007: The Sirte Agreement signed by the Déby government and four of the main politico-military rebel movements: UFDD (Union of Forces for Democracy and Development, headed by Mahamat Nouri), UFDD-F (Union of Forces for Democracy and Development – Fundamental, headed by Abdelwahid Aboud Makaye), RFC (Rally of the Forces for Change, headed by Timan Erdimi) and CNT (National Convention of Chad, headed by Hassan Saleh al Jinedi).

14 April 2008: peace negotiations held in Tripoli between the RFC (Timan Erdimi) and the government.

26 July 2009: agreement signed in Tripoli between the government and the leaders of three politico-military rebel movements: UFDD-R (Union of Forces for Democracy and Development – Renewal, headed by Issa Moussa Tamboulet), MNR (National Resistance Movement, headed by Mahama Ahmat Hamid) and FSR (Front for the Health of the Republic, headed by Hassa-ballah Soubiane).

18 August 2008: agreement signed in Libya between the government and dissidents from Erdimi's RFC (50 former rebel soldiers from the RFC to be integrated into the Chadian national army).

With Sudan

Libya has also mediated peace talks and deals between Chad and Sudan. Such deals have usually included ending hostilities, re-opening diplomatic relations and promising not to support each other's rebel movements. The most recent agreements include:

8 February 2006: the Tripoli agreement between Déby and Sudan's Omar al-Bashir in which they agreed to end hostilities between the two countries, stop supporting each other's rebels and re-open diplomatic relations.

21 February 2007: talks between Chad and Sudan, held in Tripoli and facilitated by Libya and Eritrea, ending with an agreement signed in Riyadh on 3 May 2007.

10 April 2008: talks between Chad and Sudan, held in Libreville and facilitated by Libya, Senegal and Gabon, as a follow-up to the Dakar peace agreement of 13 March 2008.

22 October 2008: talks between Chad and Sudan held in Tripoli, resulting in the re-opening of diplomatic relations (exchange of ambassadors).

29 May 2009: separate (personal) meetings held between Gaddafi and Déby and Gaddafi and al-Bashir to encourage them to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis between the two countries.

15 January 2010: The governments of Chad and Sudan signed an agreement in N'Djamena to normalise their bilateral relations. President Déby's visit to Khartoum in February 2010 was followed by the appointment on 15 February 2010 of a Chadian Ambassador to Khartoum.

Financial relations

Libya supports the Déby regime by investing heavily in Chad, especially in the oil and hotel sectors. It has recently purchased all Shell petrol stations in Chad and invested heavily in both oil extraction and refineries in the country. Libyan state-owned

Libya invests heavily in Chad, especially in the oil and hotel sectors.

companies are also investing in Chad's telecommunications and acquired a majority stake in Sotel in November 2010.

Chad and Sudan

From friendship to hatred to collaboration

Omar al-Bashir, who came to power in Sudan in June 1989 as the result of a coup, immediately gave Habré's former chief military adviser-turned-rebel, Idriss Déby, access to Sudanese territory in Darfur. In October of that year, Déby established the rebel Patriotic Salvation Movement (PSM) and started to equip and train discontented Chadian youth in Darfur with active assistance from the Sudanese government. Two months later, following a successful coup, Déby assumed the presidency of Chad and the PSM became an established political party. During the 1990s, Déby was a loyal ally of al-Bashir and, despite receiving numerous requests for support from military opposition movements in Darfur, refused to back them.

Relations turn difficult (2003-2010)

Problems between Sudan and Chad began with the Justice for Equality Movement (JEM) and gained momentum in the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) in Darfur in 2003. Since then, both al-Bashir and Déby have accused each other of supporting rebel movements that are seeking to topple their respective regimes. Al-Bashir accused Déby of providing the JEM with refuge, ammunition and training while Déby accused al-Bashir of allowing potential Chadian coup makers access to Sudanese territory and of giving the rebels military equipment and training.

In 2005, Déby forced the parliament to amend Chad's constitution to allow him to run for a third term in office. Many of his trusted advisers and ministers were dismissed or defected after protesting

against this move and internal tensions increased. Since many of the new rebel movements received financial and military support from Khartoum, official relations with Sudan deteriorated.

It is difficult to map official relations between Chad and Sudan in detail and even more difficult to analyse them because they have tended to change quickly and often. For example, although Déby was nearly ousted by Sudanese-backed rebels in April 2006, al-Bashir went to N'Djamena for Déby's third inauguration as president in August 2006 and diplomatic relations were (once again) restored. In January 2008, al-Bashir and Déby signed a new peace deal. However, less than three weeks later, in February 2008, Sudanese-backed rebels nearly took power in N'Djamena and relations between the two countries deteriorated yet again.

A new deal was signed in May 2009. However, only a few days later, Sudanese-backed Chadian rebels entered Chad from Sudan in an attempt to oust Déby. This time, however, the rebels were stopped by the Chadian army only 120 km into the country in the town of Am Dam.

The language used during this period reveals the relationship between the two countries. Déby spoke only of "Sudanese mercenaries" when talking about the rebels in Chad. By accusing Sudan of rebel activities in Chad, he was trying to persuade the international community that the source of the political instability in Chad was external. After the International Criminal Court issued an arrest order against al-Bashir in March 2009 for war crimes and crimes against humanity, Déby used international anti-al-Bashir sentiment to further scapegoat him for the unrest in Chad.

On 5 March 2008, in an interview with French TV channel France 24, Déby said that "[i]t is these people coming directly from Sudan, armed, equipped and trained by Sudan. They are mercenaries". In his televised New Year speech on 31 December 2008, he said that "[f]or three years now, our country has received daily aggressions, regularly and permanently, from Sudan... Facing this machine of repression, machine of terror and barbarous terror mounted from the Khartoum regime, our own people in eastern Chad have been obliged to flee their own territories...".

On 9 May 2009, a press release from Déby's government said that al-Bashir was responsible for destabilising Chad and that his aim was to incorporate Chad into a larger Sudan. Reportedly describing al-Bashir as "the undesirable president of Sudan" and "deaf, mute and blind" and his government as a "bloodthirsty regime", this language reveals the extent of the hatred between the two countries at the time.

Peace and friendship (January 2010 onwards)

Less than a year later, the two countries signed a peace agreement (which is still maintained) and have since received each other's representatives in their respective capitals.

In the peace deal signed in N'Djamena on 15 January 2010, the two countries agreed to prevent armed groups from using each other's territory against the interests of the other and to establish mechanisms to monitor their common border. However, in Chad people were not hopeful about the deal because numerous peace deals signed since 2005 had been violated within days of signature. Nevertheless, after President Déby traveled to Khartoum to meet al-Bashir in February 2010 and official border crossings were re-opened on 17 April 2010, hope for peace was again restored. On 21 July 2010, al-Bashir went to N'Djamena for a meeting of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). Under the terms of its obligations to the International Criminal Court, which has charged al-Bashir with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, Chad should have arrested him.

However, Déby's language had completely changed. In a speech on 24 February 2010, he was reported as saying that he wanted "to highlight and welcome the availability and flexibility of my brother, President al-Bashir of Sudan".

Shortly afterwards, on 24 February 2010, the JEM agreed a cease-fire with Khartoum in Doha.⁴ On 19 May 2010, JEM leader Dr. Khalil Ibrahim was refused entry to Chad at the airport in N'Djamena. On 27 May 2010, Déby travelled to Khartoum to take

part in the re-inauguration of al-Bashir as president. Four thousand rebels originally from Chad were reportedly expelled from Sudan between January and November 2010.⁵

Chad and France

France loves Africa! We see this affectionate relationship as precious, we want to look after it, we want to keep it alive, we want to make it grow.
François Fillon, May 2009⁶

France's exact role during the 2008 coup attempt is difficult to ascertain.

Military support

France's main political objective in Chad has been and is to keep President Déby in power. In both attempted coups in April 2006 and February 2008, Déby's victory owed much to French support. In 2008, however, France's President Sarkozy stated publicly that since French military deals with certain African countries such as Chad dated from the 1960s when the political environment was different, they should be re-negotiated or ended. By contrast, President Déby claimed in 2008 that France had a legal duty to support him against attacks from rebels and foreign powers as part of the military contract between France and Chad.⁷

The exact role of France during the attempted coup of February 2008 is difficult to determine with any certainty. According to French official sources, French soldiers in Chad only secured French citizens and property during the coup attempt. In N'Djamena, both former rebels and longtime supporters of Déby contend that France supported Déby both directly and indirectly by military means, for example, by placing snipers at strategic points in the capital on 2 Febru-

4 Jeune Afrique, "Darfour: Khartoum signe une trêve avec les rebelles du JEM", AFP, 24 February 2010, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/DEPAFP20100224083726/>, accessed 21 February 2011.

5 La Voix du Tchad, "Tchad: quatre anciens responsables rebelles arrêtés à N'Djamena", AFP, 10 November 2010, <http://www.lavoixdutchad.com/index.php?sv=60&aid=1932>, accessed 21 February 2011.
6 Speech by French Prime Minister François Fillon at the Institut des relations internationales du Cameroun, Yaoundé, on 21 May 2009, http://www.ambafrance-cm.org/IMG/pdf/intervention_du_PM_Iric.pdf, accessed 15 April 2011.
7 See the speech by President Sarkozy in Cape Town, February 2008 and an interview given by President Déby to France 24 on 8 March 2008, http://www.ambafrance-au.org/IMG/pdf/sarkozy_capetown.pdf, accessed 15 April 2011.

ary 2008, using helicopters to supervise the rebels and inform Déby of their movements, bombing rebel strongholds and providing strategic information to Déby.⁸ However, if France had been determined in its unconditional support of Déby, it could have stopped, or at least tried to stop, the rebels militarily as they crossed the frontier from Sudan days earlier.

France would have accepted regime change in Chad at that time without intervening if the rebels could have agreed on who would take over as president. Since they did not agree, France believed a coup would have led to what the then Minister for Cooperation and la francophonie, Jean-Marie Bockel, described as “an appalling situation”.⁹ On 31 December 2008, President Déby acknowledged France’s help during the attempted coup in February, saying that “[o]ur special friend France has, during this year also, supported us continuously and in many different ways, and thereby helped to achieve stability and progress for Chad”.

France is still interested in using Chad as a training ground for its military. French soldiers bound for Afghanistan are trained in Chad. France has also built up important intelligence capabilities in Chad that have been used in the US-led “war on terror”. Thus, security issues are at the top of the French agenda in Chad. In addition, having a military presence in Chad enables France to safeguard French citizens and economic interests in Chad and neighbouring countries in the event of an emergency.

Economic relations

Today, however, Chad is of minor economic importance to France. Only between 0.02% and 0.04% of all French exports go to Chad. However, uranium has been discovered in northern Chad and geological data also suggest that Chadian soil contains bauxite, diamonds and gold, among other minerals. Thus, while Chad is currently of little economic interest to France, it may well become a valuable business partner in the future. Also, even though French exports to Chad are

not significant, France is one of Chad’s most important trading partners and the possibility of developing further economic interests may also play a role.

Humanitarian interests

France wanted to be a major player in ending the conflict in Darfur and embarked on both bilateral and multilateral initiatives to mediate the conflict. The appointment of the founder of Doctors without Borders (MSF), Bernard Kouchner, as Minister of Foreign Affairs showed its desire to be an important international humanitarian power. To the frustration of the US, France refused to label the atrocities committed in Darfur as “genocide” and also worked actively within the UN to block sanctions against the regime in Sudan.

However, France lobbied for a UN-mandated European peacekeeping force to be established in eastern Chad. In October 2007, the Council of the European Union (EU) approved the European Union Force Chad/Central African Republic (EUFOR Chad/CAR) operation and deployment began in February 2008, a few days after the attempted coup. Of the 3,500 troops in EUFOR, 2,000 were deployed by France, which also housed the operational headquarters in Mont Velérien (France). Thirteen other European nations deployed the other 1,500 troops, an indication of the relatively low interest and trust in EUFOR on the part of other EU countries. An article in *The Guardian Weekly* of 6 May 2008 quoted EUFOR General Ganascia as saying that “[w]e have deployed a military force against a threat in the field that was poorly defined. In fact, we are dealing with gangs of highway robbers”.

Most Chadians doubt that Minurcat had any positive effects.

France saw EUFOR as a way of cutting the costs of its existing military presence in Chad and at the same time gaining international legitimacy for its military engagement by labelling its forces as humanitarian peacekeepers. One year later, on 15 March 2009, EUFOR was replaced by the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), which had a similar mandate. It was envisaged that MINURCAT would have 5,000 troops. Around 2,000 troops from EUFOR continued under the MINURCAT mandate, most of them French.

⁸ Interviews conducted with various political leaders, parliamentarians and former ministers in N’Djamena in August and September 2010.

⁹ Jean-Marie Bockel : “Notre présence au Tchad est une manière d’exercer une pression” , RTL, 27 February 2008, <http://www.rtl.fr/actualites/politique/article/jean-marie-bockel-notre-presence-au-tchad-est-une-maniere-d-exercer-une-pression-55070>, accessed 21 February 2011.

In March 2010, President Déby said that MINURCAT had failed to satisfy the Chadian government since it had not accomplished its mandate. He told UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon that the mission had to leave the country. By 31 December 2010, almost all MINURCAT staff had left Chad. From interviews conducted in N'Djamena in August and September 2010, most Chadians doubt that the UN peacekeeping operation had any positive effects.¹⁰

As a former colonial power, France also wants to maintain its cultural influence in Africa. In Chad, the French language has been under threat since 1979 when Arabic was added as an official language. French development aid to Chad is also important. Since 2008, however, relations with France have deteriorated and Déby has become more confident that he has total control of the country without France's support, as indicated in his speech at Chad's 50th anniversary celebrations on 11 August 2010 when he announced that "if France says that it can't afford it and wants to leave, we will maintain the best possible relations but we will not stop [Operation] Epervier [the French military mission] from leaving".¹¹ In November 2010, Kouchner was dismissed as French Foreign Minister and by the end of the following month Minurcat had left Chad.

Chad and the US

According to the US embassy in N'Djamena, relations between the US and Chad are good. The US works in partnership with the Chadian government on counterterrorism, has huge interests in Chad's petroleum sector and is the single largest contributor to humanitarian operations in eastern Chad.

Counterterrorism

A military US Africa Command (Africom) was set up in 2007 and assumed responsibility for all US military activities in Africa after October 2008. Africom's budget is fast increasing. It is involved in train-

ing anti-terrorist forces in 38 African countries. Pro-American, oil-rich authoritarian regimes are among those who receive most funding and training, Chad being one of them.

The US conducts a number of military activities in cooperation with Chad. Chad participates in the US-led and sponsored Trans-Sahel Counter-Terrorism Partnership. This includes a military assistance programme aimed at increasing Chad's counter-terrorist operations and preventing border incursions and the trafficking of people and illicit goods. In 2008, under this programme, the US provided military training, military clothing and training ammunition for Chad's armed forces to better equip them to fight al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The 2010 budget for this programme has increased, up 30% from 2009.

Another US programme, Foreign Military Financing, provides loans to African countries for the purchase of weaponry and military equipment from the US. Funding for the programme tripled between 2009 and 2010, rising from \$8.3 million to \$25.6 million. Chad received a loan of \$500,000 under this programme in 2009.

Another US military programme for African countries, the International Military Education and Training (Imet) programme, also increased its budget significantly. Chad benefited from \$400,000 under this programme in 2009.

The other obvious reason for US military engagement in Africa is to secure and maintain access to natural resources, especially oil. The petroleum sector in Chad is predominantly run by American companies (see below).

Economic relations

Since 2003, a consortium of three oil companies (consisting of US-based Exxon Mobil and Chevron and Malaysian-owned Petronas) has been extracting oil from wells in the south of Chad and sending it by pipeline via Cameroon to the Gulf of Guinea. The consortium has invested over \$7 billion in the pipeline project, including a loan from the World Bank for \$4 billion.

10 For a contrasting opinion of MINURCAT, see, for example, John Karlsrud and Randi Solhjell, "An Honourable Exit for MINURCAT?", Policy Brief 3/2010, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Oslo, 2010, <http://www.nupi.no/content/download/13652/128955/file/PB-03-10-Karlsrud-Solhjell.pdf>, accessed 25 February 2011.

11 "Idriss Deby délire: l'armée française devient indésirable!", Le Blog de Makaila, 11 August 2010, <http://makaila.over-blog.com/article-idriss-deby-delire-l-armee-fran-aise-devient-indesirable-55262169.html>, accessed 21 February 2011.

Oil represents over 80% of Chad's exports. The US is by far the country's largest purchaser of oil, accounting for over 90% of its oil exports. In 2008, around 25% of the oil imported by the US came from Africa, with as much as 17% coming from Chad and the Gulf of Guinea. Chad has overtaken both Gabon and Equatorial Guinea as a supplier of oil to the US.¹² Its oil exports make it the sixth leading African exporter to the US. It has therefore quickly assumed major economic importance for the US. The US is also the second most important exporter of goods and services to Chad, surpassed only by France.

Humanitarian aid

It is difficult to assess whether US humanitarian aid to Darfur and eastern Chad has had an impact in Sudan or Chad and to what extent it has benefited the Chadian and Sudanese people. In the past five years, the US government has provided nearly \$10 billion in assistance to Sudan and eastern Chad. In 2009, USAID contributed \$128 million to help displaced people in Sudan and Sudanese refugees and internally displaced people in eastern Chad.

The US is Chad's largest purchaser of oil, accounting for over 90% of its oil exports.

displaced people in eastern Chad.

The Darfur lobby in the US has been strong and effective.

As a result of heavy lobbying from both the US government and civil society groups, in March 2009 the International Criminal Court charged al-Bashir with genocide and crimes against humanity and issued an international arrest warrant for him. For the US, a successful coup in Chad would mean an extension of al-Bashir's influence in the region. It has therefore supported President Déby in Chad for two reasons: 1) to keep Chad politically stable in order to safeguard its own investments and oil supplies; and 2) to curb the influence of al-Bashir and Islam in the region.

Conclusion

At the beginning of 2011, President Déby seems stronger than ever. He has bought a large amount of military equipment over the past three years. By the end of 2010 he had increased the number of army

personnel from around 25,000 in 2003 to 80,000. Oil revenues from 2003 onwards have led to a significant increase in Chad's gross domestic product (purchasing power parity), which has more than doubled in the past ten years.¹³

Relations between Déby's Chad and Gaddafi's Libya are strong, personalised and friendly, as evidenced by Libya's ever increasing military support and economic investment in the country. Since the peace deal was signed with al-Bashir in January 2010, relations between Chad and Sudan have remained calm. Chad has made it clear that the country will survive and that Déby will stay in power without help from France. Chad is thus less dependent on its former colonial power than it was in February 2008. Given US anti-terror initiatives in the Sahel, the regime in Chad can rely on continued US support. The US appears to see political stability in Chad as important for safeguarding both the supply of Chadian oil to its domestic market and investments by large US oil companies in Chad itself.

13 Index Mundi, Historical data graphs per year – Chad, <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=cd&v=65>, accessed 21 February 2011.

Further reading

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